

# ROTUNDA

SPRING 1974 VOLUME 7 NUMBER 2 \$1.25



An Iranian Tablet

Changan—Capital of Tang China

Jades in the Arctic



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# ROTUNDA

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The cover: Attendants of the Princess Yong tai;  
replica of tomb wall paintings. See page 20



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## On Resurrecting Settees

Helen Ignatieff Canadiana Department

**D**iscerning the quality of an old piece when it sits stripped of upholstery, its framework scarred with nail holes, is an art which requires an unerring eye, a trained mind, and a good dose of intuition. When you look at the "before" picture of the unusual, delicate little settee recently added to the collections of the Canadiana Department, you may wonder how its quality could have been determined at all . . .

In this particular case, we were fortunate in that the sofa came to us with a clear genealogy. It was the product of an earlier era, where planned obsolescence and the annual trade-in were still concepts of the future, so that a good quality piece could expect to remain in one household for some time. It came from the household of Dr. Solomon Jones (1756-1822) whose house, "Homewood," built of rubble stone in 1800, still stands at Maitland, near Brockville in eastern Ontario. Born in the province of New Jersey, educated for the medical profession in Albany, New York, he came to Canada as a surgeon's mate with the Loyalist forces during the American revolutionary war and settled in Augusta Township on the St. Lawrence River. Dr. Jones was one of the first physicians in what was to become Upper Canada, as well as one of the first magistrates, representing Leeds and Frontenac in the Legislative Assembly from 1796 to 1800. He had four sons and three daughters, one of whom was called Emeline Sedate Jones.

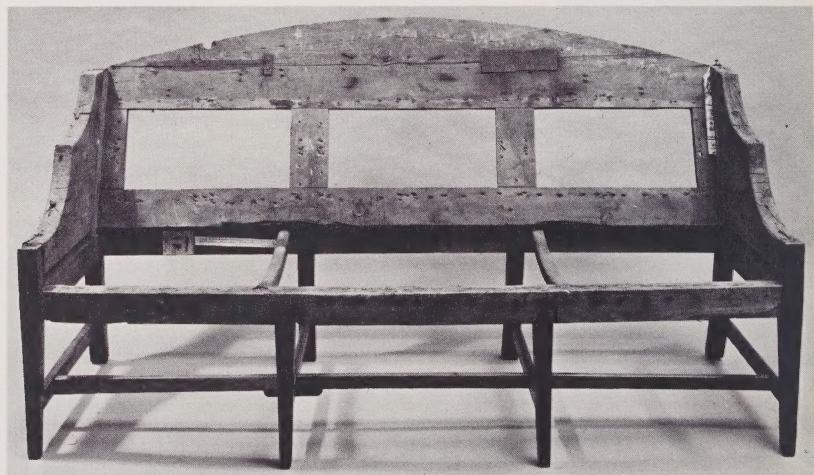
This genealogy, however, provides few clues to the

placing of the settee within a particular tradition of design. The only way to establish this is to compare the features of its frame with what is known of the history of settee manufacture in North America at the beginning of the 19th century and earlier.

The sofa is made from cherry, with pine as the secondary wood. The squared tapered front legs are reeded, the back legs are square and untapered. Plain stretchers connect all the legs, and pieces of iron stretcher and square and rose-headed nails were the materials used for the necessary bracing.

The three styles most commonly known in North America during its owner's lifetime were Hepplewhite, Chippendale and Sheraton, the latter most popular in the American colonies. The distinguishing characteristics of Hepplewhite's designs were a lightness, delicacy and grace, an effect achieved more through inlay than through carving, as was the case with Chippendale designs. Where Chippendale used the cabriole and the square leg with a good deal of carving, the Hepplewhite manner preferred a slighter leg, plain, fluted or reeded, tapering to a spade foot.

This distinction alone, however, is not sufficient to attribute the settee to the Hepplewhite tradition. In the colonies especially, the designs of the three great sofa makers were used in combination, incorporating features of one into those of another. In traditional Hepplewhite furniture, stretcher bars and straining rails are absent in all examples except for a grandfa-



ther chair. The stretchers found in our sofa are thus uncharacteristic of Hepplewhite, and in fact display Chippendale mannerisms. But, once again, an attribution to Chippendale on the basis of this feature would be too hasty.

It is possible to explain the incorporation of such stretchers in both historical and pragmatic terms. For one thing, Chippendale is of earlier date than Hepplewhite. It was very popular in the second half of the 18th century, and an overlap of the Chippendale onto the newer Hepplewhite could represent a phenomenon common to the introduction of a new style in whatever art form. This would also suggest an earlier date than the 1820 attribution we have provisionally assigned to it. On the other hand, stretchers were frequently found in country furniture in both England and North America, and this would suggest only practical means of strengthening a very delicately built piece.

After examining all the evidence, we found it weighted in the direction of Hepplewhite, so that the settee now stands as an example of an adaptation of several features of both the old and new styles.

The dimensions of sofas of this period varied considerably according to the size of the room they furnished. The size of an English prototype, for example, is: "length between 6 and 7 feet; depth about 30 inches, height of the seat frame 14 inches; total height in the back 3 feet one inch," according to one

published pattern book. Our new sofa was probably designed to suit a specific room, since its dimensions deviate from this: it is one foot shorter, 8 inches narrower in the seat, 2½ inches higher in the seat frame and one inch shorter in overall height.

The upholstery material used also varied, but damask, brocades and red morocco leather seem to be the predominant ones. Ours has been upholstered in brocade, in the Hepplewhite style which in this respect usually resembled Chippendale, with the whole seating section covered, in contrast to Sheraton's wood rim round the sweep of the back and down the ends to the arms.

In the early 19th century, sofas were not in common use in the colonies, which makes the acquisition of this essential example of early Upper Canada furniture very important. The finding of such a gem, however, does not always coincide with the ability to pay for it. It was at that critical moment that a member of the Municipal Chapter of the Independent Order of the Daughters of the Empire telephoned us. It seemed that the Order has a surplus fund and that they would be very sympathetic to a request for assistance, since they had had the impulse to record in a practical manner the fact that the IODE and the ROM were born at the same time sixty years ago, in 1931. On Tuesday, January 22, 1974, Mrs. Fulcher, Regent of the IODE Municipal Chapter, presented this beautiful jubilee anniversary present to the Museum.



Panoramic view of Godin Tepe, with the modern village of Godin and foothills in the background

Economic tablet from Godin Tepe, Period v. An example of the earliest attempt at writing in this part of the Near East. C. 3200-3000 B.C.



# The Day We Found the Tablet

*It was  
five thousand  
years old*

T. Cuyler Young, Jr.

Photographs by Claus Breede

Since 1965 we have excavated at Godin Tepe in central western Iran for a total of 471 days. Many of those days have been exciting, and many of them, whether exciting or dull, are memorable. Now that the field work of the Godin Project is finished, can one say that a particular day stands out from the past as most memorable? I realize that as a scholar one should not even ask such a question. It is the whole Project that is memorable, the total accumulation of knowledge that is exciting; all days should be the same. True, but scholars are human beings, with all of the emotional baggage of other human beings. So, I

confess that some days were more memorable than others, some more exciting. And one day stands out particularly.

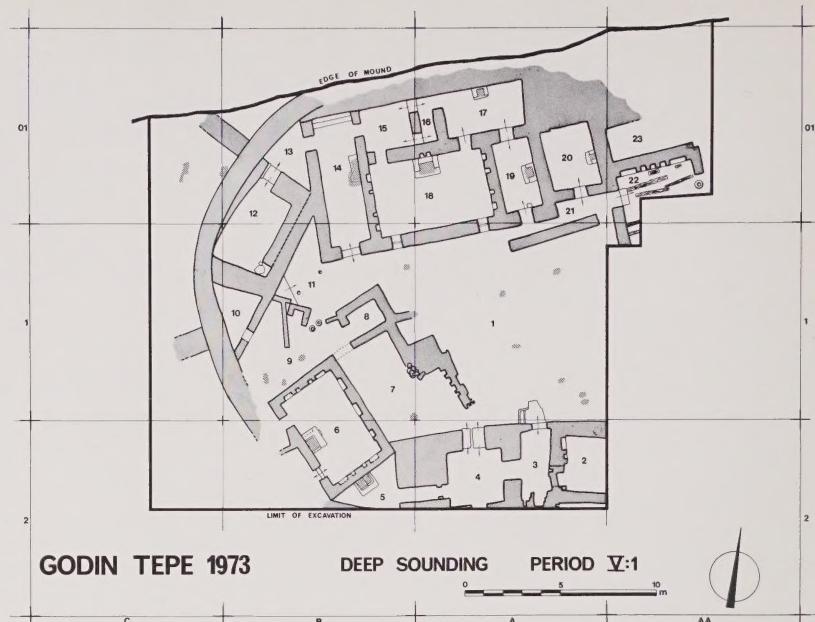
I suppose I might as well go even further and confess that one hour stands out from all the rest—and the rest is a lot of hours. A normal working day on the Godin Project lasted between 11 and 12 hours. That makes a total of about 5672 hours in 471 days. The event I have in mind happened on the 375th day (June 6, 1973) in the 4505th hour (about 11:00 a.m.).

Some fifty people in all have participated in field work at Godin, and I know that each person has his own memorable



Plan of Phase 3 of the building complex of Godin Period v. Several structures, some of a public, some of a private nature, are surrounded by an oval enclosure wall

(Opposite page) Plastered hearth in the main room of the northern building within the oval; Godin Period v



day and perhaps his own memorable hour. The day and hour of which I speak, however, is the only one I know of on which an electric impulse crackled through the whole group and we all, staff and workmen together, were charged with excitement. I was on the south side of the Deep Sounding, scraping and reading a section. Suddenly I heard a great babble of voices, and then above the din the distinct words, "Charlie found a tablet." I looked up. Like bees going to honey everyone was moving in the direction of Charlie Gates' square on the north side of the Deep Sounding. Without thinking I shouted for all to freeze and go on with their work. "Let's not get excited. One by one drift over and have a look, but whatever you do keep the workmen on the job and try not to give them the idea that some kind of 'treasure' has been found." Only then did I think, "Young, that's damn foolish. You yourself are almost out of control with excitement." So I stood as still as I could, took a score or more deep breaths, and then lit a cigarette. Each staff member in turn went over to Charlie's square with studied casualness. A few of the pickmen

went too, for they knew something was up and there was no point in trying to stop them. That would have created more of a fuss than letting them go. I forced myself to play around a bit more with the section, and then, when all had had their turn, I went over too.

When Charlie handed me the tablet and showed me the spot on the Period V floor where he had excavated it, my blood pressure went right back up. So I did some more deep breathing and, though I don't recall exactly, I suppose I had another cigarette.

Of course it really wasn't the finding of a single tablet that turned us on, even though in the end it was about the best of the 43 complete tablets or tablet fragments that we found in 1973. The real excitement lay in what that single find meant, for given a modicum of archaeological knowledge and imagination we could visualize something of the context of that tablet, even though the evidence still lay under the ground.

We have known since our 1961 survey that Period V material (3200-3000 B.C.) existed at Godin because we found pottery characteristic of this culture on the

surface of the mound. Our test excavations in 1965 had confirmed this, for we were able then to clear a few square metres of the Godin V deposit. It then became our goal to dig the Deep Sounding to a depth of at least one building level into Period V (it turned out there was only one), and it has been a long, sometimes painful, but always fruitful process. The Deep Sounding began in 6th century B.C. deposits and initially covered an area of 700 square metres. Slowly we dug our way downwards through some 8 metres of Period III (2400-1300 B.C.) and 2 metres of Period IV (2950-2400 B.C.). In the end we reached a total depth of some 11 metres and were able to clear about 550 square metres of the Period V deposit.

Now that does not seem like a very large area, particularly considering that Godin Tepe is one of the largest mounds in central western Iran. Yet it is a big hole in the ground given the depth of deposit involved, the slow pace at which modern archaeologists must excavate if they are to record their finds correctly, and the cost of getting even that much done. It is also a considerable area if you

realize that the Deep Sounding at Godin is one of the larger holes ever dug in a prehistoric mound in Iran, and that it has produced the largest sample of several cultural periods that we have in a region about the size of southern Ontario. Yet to dig the whole of the Citadel Mound at Godin to the Period V level would take 187 field seasons (at our present pace of excavation) and about \$4,740,000. The archaeologist, like his fellow historians, cannot escape the curse of having to reconstruct the totality of the past from selected fragments.

Statistical gloom aside, what did we find in Period V that was so exciting?

The building remains of Period V consist of the better part of a

single structural complex which went through three distinct phases in its lifetime. On the north, west and south sides of the Deep Sounding we recovered large segments of the oval wall which enclosed the compound. The original oval was 21 metres wide and probably about 33 metres long. About a third of it lies to the east of the area we have been able to excavate, so we were incredibly lucky: the Deep Sounding turns out to have been so sited that it hit the Period V building complex almost dead centre.

A gate and gate room (room 4) on the south side of the oval formed the entrance to the complex. East and west of the gate room were small store rooms, in

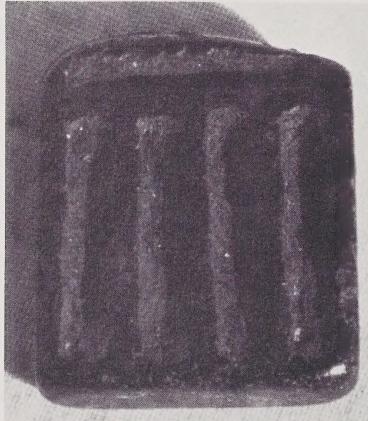
one of which (room 3) we found a sizable cache of tablets. Moving north from the gate room across a rather fine mudbrick threshold, one entered the great open central courtyard (area 1). The fragments of walls which define areas 7 and 8 were built only in the third and final phase of Period V, and originally this central court extended to the west all the way to area 9 and room 6. It was a truly monumental open public area some 17 metres long and 10 metres wide.

The building on the north side of the courtyard was most probably a public structure. In its third phase it consisted of a series of six rooms built around a central hall (room 18). Its architectural elements are carefully balanced: the two doors in the north wall, equi-



distant on either side of the carefully constructed and well planned hearth; the two windows in the south wall looking out onto the courtyard; the niches built into the east and west walls.

The contents of room 18 are almost as interesting as the architecture. That first tablet, the one that caused all the initial excitement, was on the floor just southwest of the hearth. Nearby, on the floor and in the occupational debris above the floor, we found smashed pottery vessels, a very fine bead or amulet and other tablets and tablet fragments. These tablets are simple economic documents of a kind known from lowland sites in Greater Mesopotamia such as Susa, Warka and Khafaje. They have only numbers on them: dots and wedges made with the same stylus. Though we are not even sure of the number system used, they are clearly account records of commercial transactions, possibly involving trade.



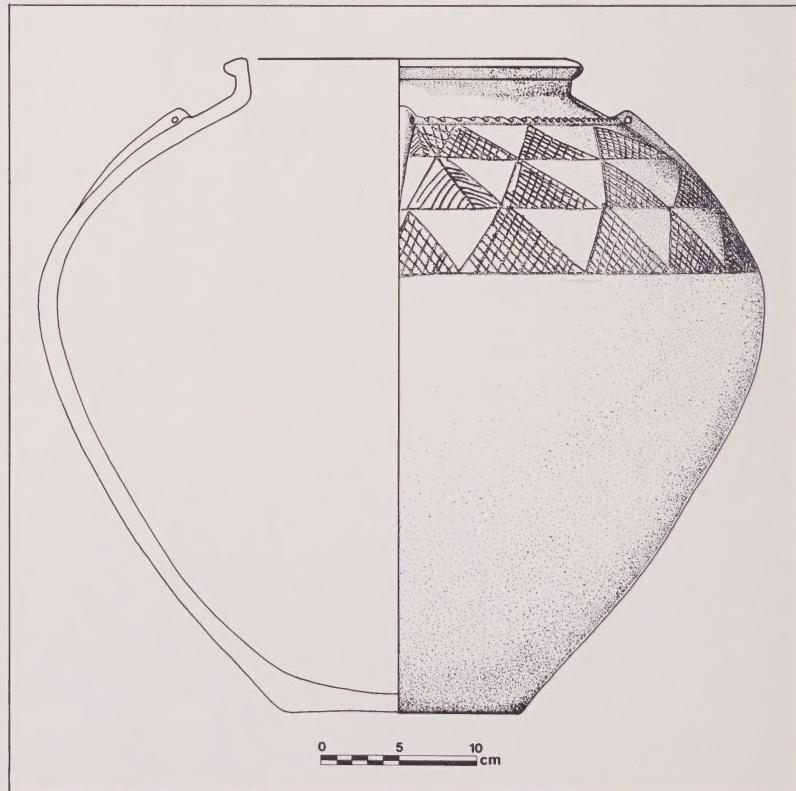
Stone bead or amulet found on the floor of the main room of the northern building; Godin Period v

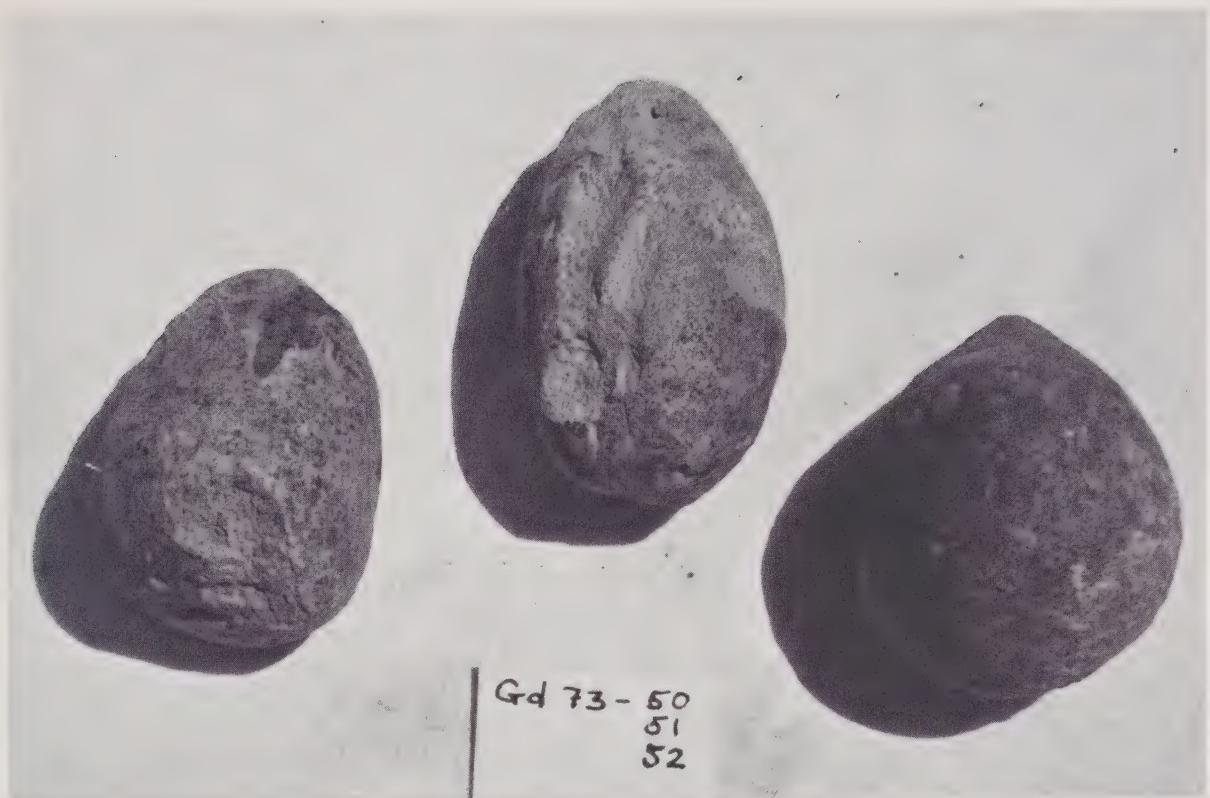
Typical four-legged jar of Godin Period v. Jars of this exact same type have been found in lowland Mesopotamia dating to the late Uruk / Jemdet Nasr Periods

In the southeast corner, just inside the eastern window which looked out on the courtyard, was a cache of 1400 clay sling balls. At least we have always called these things sling balls. They are known in this part of Iran from cultural contexts dating back to the late 5th millennium B.C. (ROTUNDA, Winter 1973, p. 19) and, though made out of unbaked clay, would do for hunting small game or birds. On the other hand, why 1400 of them in one corner of a large public building in Godin V? Could they perhaps be some sort of counters used in financial transactions?

Another public building on a monumental scale defined the east side of the central courtyard. Unfortunately, only part of this structure could be excavated, but we discovered that at least one room (22) of this eastern building had been burned, for we found the charred roof beams still in their original alignment in the collapsed debris.

At the west end of the courtyard was room 6, probably a private house. True, the room has some of the features of room 18, to which we have assigned a public function: a central hearth against one wall, balanced paired doorways in the back wall, and balanced wall niches, this time in one long wall as well as in the two shorter walls. On the other hand, there are no windows opening into the courtyard, and access to the room is very restricted. One had to come around from the north and squeeze between the oval enclosure wall and the west wall of room 6 to get to one door, and the other door opened only into a small storage area in the southwest corner of the oval. The hearth is of a different sort than the one in room 18. Instead of a fireplace apparently used primarily for heating the room, it was a cooking hearth, with a fine plaster griddle and a small burner on which pots could be set. Finally, all the small finds of this room





can be understood as purely domestic equipment; the more elegant finds of room 18 are absent.

The rooms in the northwest corner of the oval are probably all store rooms. Rooms 13 and 10 were triangular, like room 5, for every so often architectural adjustments had to be made in order to fit rectangular rooms into an oval enclosure.

A great number of small finds and large quantities of pottery were found throughout this elaborate architectural complex. In addition to the tablets, tablet fragments and sling balls, three very significant categories of objects warrant special attention: Bevel Rim Bowls, jar sealings, and cylinder seals.

In one sense it is easy to describe what a Bevel Rim Bowl is. It is a handmade, very crude pottery vessel, and we even know a lot about how it was made. A blob of clay, usually mixed with straw, was slapped into a hole in the ground the size and shape of

the vessel, and the clay shaped against the sides of the hole with fist and fingers. The characteristic "bevelled" rim of the vessel was formed by "cutting" away the excess clay which rose above the hole with the thumb. When the clay was dry and had shrunk just a bit, the vessel was lifted out of the hole (much like taking muffins out of a baking pan), dried a bit longer in the sun, and then fired lightly in the kiln. This simple and efficient method of manufacture was used because the people of Godin's Period V, and of related cultures elsewhere, used these bowls in huge quantities. We have yet to do the necessary counts of the Bevel Rim Bowls we found at Godin, but there will be thousands, and at contemporary sites elsewhere quantities found have run to the hundreds of thousands. What specific use the Bevel Rim Bowl served, and in such quantities, is what we would all like to know.

Perhaps the best suggestion yet

Examples from the cache of over 1400 clay sling balls found in the southeast corner of the northern building; Godin Period v

is that they were ration bowls. The implications of this suggestion are important, for one can then speculate that someone had charge of large quantities of grain (or dates or some other food-stuff that could be measured and handed out in these bowls), that a good many people worked for those with the grain, and that those workers were paid in measured quantities of grain distributed something like a wage. In short, one would then not be talking about a simple, self-sufficient Neolithic farming community. One would be describing a social, political and economic system which is rather highly structured and quite sophisticated. Bevel Rim Bowls are well known from southern Mesopotamia (Sumer) and from Khuzistan, the centre of

early Elamite civilization in southwestern Iran. They have also been found on survey on a few mounds in the central highlands. In the lowlands of Sumer and Elam they are one of the ceramic hallmarks of the beginnings of urbanization and of the development of the world's first civilization in the full sense of the word. Godin V, however, is the first time they have been found in the mountains this far north and east of the lowlands in an excavated context yielding other evidence for strong cultural connections between the mountains and the lowlands.

Jar sealings are also found in the lowlands and, similarly, become much more common with the beginnings of urbanization and civilization. Several were found in



A typical Bevel Rim Bowl from Godin Period v. Similar vessels have been found in large quantities in lowland Mesopotamia.

Impression of a stone cylinder seal from Godin Period v.  
Photo L. Warren, ROM



the Godin V deposit. To seal a jar, a piece of cloth was stretched over the mouth and down the neck of the jar, and tied in place with string. A chunk of wet clay was slapped onto the top of the jar and smoothed down over the cloth and string, and, while the clay was still damp, a cylinder seal was rolled, or a signet seal stamped, into the clay. Thus the contents of the jar were sealed and the owner designated.

Finding such jar sealings at Godin in Period V deposits, of course, indicates only that there were jars with sealed contents at Godin. They might have been sealed anywhere. Finding actual cylinder seals, however, means that jars were, in fact, filled and sealed at Godin. We found two seals, one in a good context on the floor of the central courtyard. Such seals, particularly with these designs and motifs, once again testify to strong connections between the lowlands of Mesopotamia and Khuzistan and the mountain area of Godin.

Yet not everything found in the Godin V deposit has its counterpart in Mesopotamia or Khuzistan. Much is of strictly local manufacture and origin, and this shows most clearly in the totality of the ceramic assemblage. In the oval enclosure on the summit of the Citadel mound, the pottery we found was predominately of a type showing connections with Mesopotamia and Khuzistan, while at the base of the mound where we were able to clear some 165 square metres of another part of the Period V deposit, the great bulk of the pottery was of the local highland type, and vessels with lowland connections were comparatively rare.

So what? What does all this add up to, and why all the excitement?

The Godin V finds have provided clear evidence of a strong penetration of early Mesopotamian or Elamite urban civilization into the highlands of central western Iran. We already had some hints that such influences were present, but no evidence for any

cultural contact on this scale. The highlands of central western Iran were clearly part of the whole cultural region within which the world's first urban civilization developed. The people of these mountain valleys, once thought to be on the periphery of such cultural developments, can now be seen as having participated in the development of writing, of sophisticated concepts of private property, of structured economic systems, of stratified societies, and of international trade.

The particulars and mechanisms of that involvement, however, remain unclear. Is the oval on the top of the Godin V mound simply a lowland Mesopotamian or Elamite trading station set in the midst of a local population centre? Is this monumental architectural complex perhaps also a manifestation of lowland political power in the highlands? Or are we looking at a highland culture's copy of more civilized lowland patterns? Perhaps the degree of cultural contact and cultural interaction between mountains and lowlands was such that it is false even to make a distinction between the two when trying to understand the dynamics of the late fourth millennium B.C.

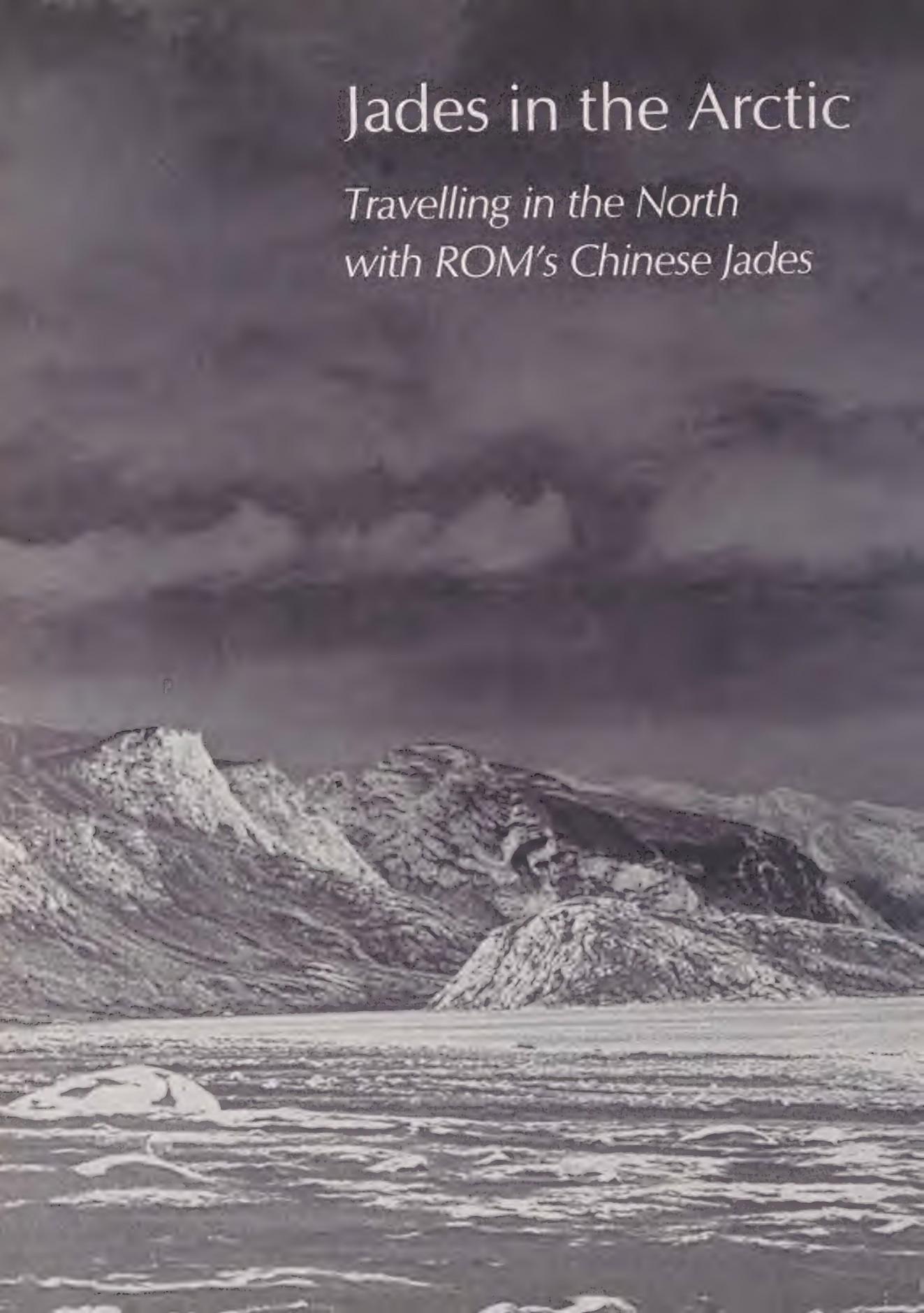
Our excitement on June 6, 1973 did not come from any answers we might get from Godin V to these questions. Rather the finding of that one tablet and the promise of similar finds to come was exciting because it suddenly revealed an incredible number of questions which could be asked—questions which no one working in this area had thought to pose before. The fun of archaeology on routine days is in pushing horizons of knowledge outward bit by bit with hard work. What made the finding of that first tablet so memorable and so unroutine an event was that suddenly the horizon of knowledge within which questions could be asked and answers sought was expanding so rapidly that even the trained mind had to scramble to keep up. ♦



T. Cuyler Young, Jr., is Curator of the ROM's West Asian Department and Director of the ROM's field work in Iran. Born in Iran and educated at Princeton University (B.A.) and University of Pennsylvania (Ph.D.), he joined the staff of the Museum in 1963. His interest in West Asian archaeology took him to Mukran in Pakistan in 1960, and to Iran on the Hasanlu project in 1958-1961. Dr. Young has been involved in excavations at Godin Tepe since 1965. Earlier accounts of finds in Iran appeared in ROTUNDA, Volume I, No. 2; Volume 3, nos. 1 and 3; and Volume 6, no. 1.

# Jades in the Arctic

*Travelling in the North  
with ROM's Chinese Jades*



**D**uring a recent winter, eight display cases containing 250 pieces of Chinese jade travelled 6,700 miles in the Eastern Arctic and were seen by 1,200 people. The exhibition had first been displayed in the ROM's Chinese galleries and then in Hamilton, Sudbury, Peterborough and Guelph.

In the South, the jades were accompanied by a free, explanatory pamphlet and museum preparators to move them and set them up. In the North, I was both guide and preparator.

When I was chosen to go with the jades late in 1972, I knew very

little about the North except that there were many inconsistencies and contradictions in the written material available. Once I was there, however, I had unlimited access to anecdotes and some very perceptive analyses of local problems by people living and working in the North.

To live as a transplanted southerner in a way of life so precariously different puts new demands on one, and some people

**Hugh Wylie**

*Photographs by the author*





Previous page—Pangnirtung;  
above: Cape Dorset in the snows of  
November

have difficulty coping with the situation. For most southerners the Eskimo community is inaccessible due to language and cultural differences. In many settlements, the unescapably close and constant contact among so very few people from the South—missionaries, Hudson's Bay Company employees, government administrators, teachers, and RCMP—results in a feeling of claustrophobia, especially during the long winter.

Added to the problems of personal adjustment are the rigours of the harsh environment. Although at Frobisher Bay some people can work and live all winter without going outside the government complex, a severe winter storm can break their apartment windows and come rushing in. In a recent winter, several houses in the settlement of Pangnirtung were blown off their pilings.

But any discomfort caused me by the climate was more than

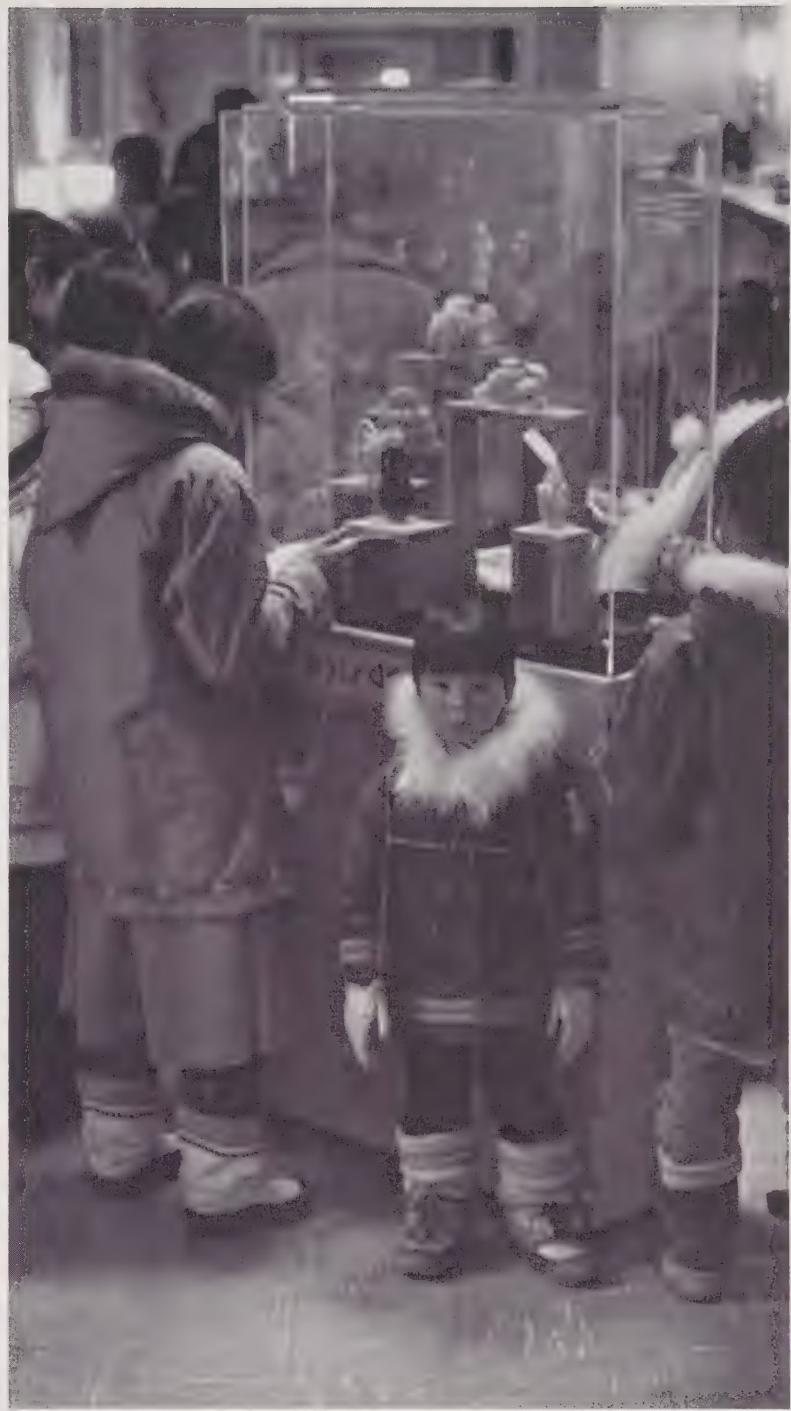
compensated for by the physical setting. The land has a majestic bleakness. The Arctic sky with its eerie light produced colours I have never encountered in the South. When the sun was visible it created endless shadows across the snow and rocks. Rainbows appeared as two huge discs on the horizon, equidistant from the rising and setting sun, or as arcs around the sun (just like the logo on Eskimo Pie wrappers). The northern lights seemed a more than adequate delight to me, but "old northern hands" assured me I was too far north. The northern lights are supposed to be at their best around the latitude of Churchill, Manitoba.

Despite preparatory arrangements made by the ROM Programme Secretary's office, there were still many unknowns when I arrived in Frobisher Bay on Thanksgiving Day. Accommodation and food, places to install the exhibition, and transportation of the cases to and from airstrips

had to be worked out as I moved from settlement to settlement. Most important was finding the best way to present the exhibition to the Eskimos (Inuit) and to the people from the South (Kabloona) working in the North.

Frobisher Bay, my first stop, was also the point where I waited for planes going to the smaller settlements, where the jades were to be displayed in the schools. In Frobisher Bay I usually stayed at the eight-storey high-rise, in apartments of the Adult Education staff who were working in the settlements. At Cape Dorset, Pangnirtung, and Pond Inlet on Baffin Island, and at Resolute Bay on Cornwallis Island, I stayed in the homes of teachers or administrators and contributed to their food costs. I could only hope that my contributions did cover the cost, and that I did not too much upset their year's meal plans, for a ship in the fall brings all their food for the winter. Staying with teacher's friendly families was very pleasant, and it permitted my learning more about the settlements. I could also discuss scheduling and presentation of the exhibition with them while enjoying their hospitality.

The day after arriving in Frobisher Bay I started out for the Adult Education Centre to set up the exhibit. A blizzard was raging, and I gladly used the above-ground tunnel linking the government complex where I stayed with the lower part of town. I thought the two-minute walk from the end of the tunnel to the Centre would not be too difficult. It took longer than two minutes. I did not really feel lost, for I kept bumping into houses, but I would have felt foolish knocking on a door to say I couldn't find a building that was probably right next door. Later I found out that it was even more foolish just trying to go anywhere in such limited visibility. People have died in sudden snow storms, which are especially dangerous if the wind changes, making those lost think they are walking



Pond Inlet—one young spectator is more interested in the photographer than in the jades



Youngsters at Pangnirtung. The case is labelled in Eskimo syllabics

Volunteer assistant adjusts a case in the school at Resolute Bay



towards town when in reality they may be walking out to sea on the ice.

Frobisher Bay is also memorable to me because of its food prices. The cheapest item on the coffee shop menu was tuna salad sandwich—at \$1.75. Because the only grocery store was in "suburban" Ajax, three miles away, I relied on equally high-priced packaged foods from Brian Pearson's Arctic Ventures store.

My concern that the exhibition might not be well received was soon dispelled. Although many Eskimo artists display attitudes towards themselves and their art differing from those of artists in the South, their reactions on being introduced to art of a different culture showed perception transcending their alleged purely commercial orientation. Even the pieces chosen more for archaeological importance than for aesthetic reasons interested the people. I showed slides of other Chinese art objects to complement the exhibition, and they too were very successful. Slides of Chinese wood-block printing technique, showing Chinese people, always astounded some Inuit because the Chinese looked like them.

The school children came in class groups during school hours. Even those in kindergarten and the lower grades did not lose interest as quickly as I had expected. Sometimes there was a classroom assistant to translate, but often I could only involve the younger children in the exhibition through comparison of different colours in the stone, shapes of the carvings, and names of animals depicted in the works. English comprehension was no problem for those in the upper grades. I told them of the sources of jadestone the Chinese carved, the technique of carving, and the uses and meaning of some of the pieces. They also grasped the function of some of the early jades as archaeological evidence, especially after seeing slides of excavated tombs.



The children seemed more observant and appreciative than most school groups in the Museum galleries. Perhaps they would relish seeing anything new brought into the settlements, but they pored over many of the pieces and even explored the visual aspects of the display cases, discovering multi-seamed optical illusions by putting their eyes up to the corner joins in the plexiglass.

The exhibition was usually open for adults on weekday evenings and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. One of the Inuit staff at the Frobisher Bay Adult Education Centre translated and recorded on tape cassettes a general introduction to the exhibition and a commentary on

the slide show. She also translated and wrote in the syllabic alphabet a general descriptive label for each display case. In Pond Inlet and Resolute Bay I also had interpreters who were quite helpful when people had specific questions not answered by the tapes.

I was asked several times if I had carved the jades myself, or if they belonged to me or were for sale. At one school, the children saw me moving in the cases and asked if I was the visiting dentist, coming to pull their teeth. It was hard to convince one man that a dish with an inward curving rim was carved stone; he was sure it must be moulded plastic or had been formed from molten stone.

As I learned more about the

Boys at Frobisher Bay have just discovered the optical illusions formed by peering through the plexiglass joints



North I was able to make the exhibition more understandable. It was difficult at first to explain the function of ritual jades to the school groups in Frobisher Bay. Then I discovered they had all seen the Territorial Mace carried into the opening session of the Territorial Council meetings, the same day the jade exhibit opened. When I related the ritual jades to a ceremony they had experienced, their use became more clear. Unfortunately the comparison was useless in other settlements.

In Cape Dorset the co-op boat had just gone out to try to bring back stone for the carvers, and I compared this to the Chinese importation of jadestone. An archer's thumb ring, arrowheads, and a spearhead made sense to both children and adults. Many young people have no hunting

skills, even with rifles, but they are acquainted with the hunting tradition because they hear about it from the adult men.

Sometimes the Inuit themselves made comparisons which helped me in drawing others' attention to certain pieces. An old man told me through an interpreter that the jade belt-hooks in the exhibition were very similar in shape to the carved hooks that were formerly used to fasten the straps of the *amaut* (pouch for carrying a baby inside the back of a parka). There was no need for special introductions to the animal sculptures because differences from and similarities to their own works were immediately apparent.

Everyone was impressed by the craftsmanship and, especially, by the antiquity of the pieces. There was much "oohing" and "aahing"

when the taped commentary mentioned that some of the jades were several thousand years old. Perhaps people responded well because so many of them had worked with stone. I often wished they could touch a piece of jade, as well as see it. Some carvers in Pangnirtung knew the hardness of jade. A Nordair pilot had given them a small block of nephrite, but with the tools available the Inuit carvers were only able to make a chip on one edge.

One Eskimo told me that the high cost of transportation in the North made the exhibition a dubious expenditure, considering the pressing social and economic problems there. I arrived in one settlement, experiencing -40° temperature, to be confronted by an Education official who also doubted the value of the exhibi-

tion. He was leaving by the plan on which I had arrived, but he had time to tell me he knew the Inuit would prefer to see carving from other parts of the Arctic. He said he hoped I would not make the Inuit feel the Chinese were better carvers than they. I assured him that Chinese jade carving and Eskimo stone carving were too different to compare in terms of quality. Other visitors to the North, it seems, had instilled feelings of inferiority in the carvers. The deprecators must have used criteria that neglected aesthetics. I was continually amazed that so much good art could be produced in a far from encouraging environment.

Variance in artistic standards is sometimes the result of administration procedures. Someone applying for welfare may be told to go home and try to carve something. Not everyone is an artist, and carvings produced under such coercion are not necessarily art. In some settlements the white people receive the most callers offering arts and crafts for sale on Saturday night, just before bingo is played at the community hall. Some of what is offered looks as though it was hurriedly finished in order to get some money in time for this social event. As well as good art, airport art, and souvenir art, there is also bingo art being produced in the North. In the schools the pupils' art work, when it was not stifled by imposed southern content or colouring-book-type busy-work, seemed consistently better than art I've seen in schools in North America and Japan.

Many of the administrators and teachers are dedicated people, doing what they can under existing conditions. In some, however, I sensed patronizing and colonial attitudes. A few are insensitive to what the Inuit can offer, particularly in the area of human relationships, and see them only as the "white man's burden." If the Inuit are going to adjust to the new way of life they have been offered, or perhaps had inflicted

on them, education and training for wage employment will have to improve remarkably, as well as respect for some aspects of Eskimo life.

Some Inuit will not be able to make the adjustment. There seems to be nothing to replace the feeling of self-sufficiency and human dignity that was part of the hunting economy, and to dispel the demoralisation that now threatens many of the communities. I arrived in Cape Dorset shortly after two suicides and two attempted suicides. Low morale was perhaps reflected in the initial response to the jade exhibition in Cape Dorset. Although notices were translated and sent home with the school children, only four adults came on each of the first two evenings. Then the Anglican minister, Chris Williams, mentioned the jades in his Eskimo language service. As a result, fifty people came on each of the remaining two days of the exhibit.

In Cape Dorset, the slides I showed of Chinese wood-block print techniques had special significance. James Houston had introduced the wood-block print form there in 1957, after studying in Japan. The people who, since then, designed stone-cuts, carved the stone slabs, or did the actual printing have worked in ways very similar to the production of Chinese wood-block prints.

My attitudes towards the exhibition were mixed because of what sometimes seemed to me to be inverted priorities for government spending. On the other hand, people in depressed areas are deprived culturally as well as economically. I am glad they were able to experience something that most people, living far from cities with good Chinese collections, seldom do. Both Eskimos and whites were grateful to have the opportunity of seeing the jades and most felt they had been exposed to something quite special. The travelling exhibition won the ROM many friends in the North. ♦

Hugh Wylie joined the ROM's Far Eastern Department in 1971. His study programme at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio, included a year abroad in Japan. After a year of graduate work in Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, he joined the U.S. Peace Corps, teaching English on Ponape Island in Micronesia. After immigrating to Canada he took a Master of Arts degree in East Asian Studies at the University of Toronto. Hugh recently became a Canadian citizen. He left the Museum in March for two years' study of Japanese art history on a Japanese Ministry of Education Scholarship at Waseda University, Tokyo.



Gold bowl with repoussé lotus petals and chased ornament of deer, birds and flowers; from a treasure trove in the southern suburbs of Sian (Changan).  
Opposite: large stone attendant by the "spirit way" leading to the tomb of the Princess Yong tai



# Changan Great Capital of Tang China

The Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-906) and the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.—A.D. 220; see ROTUNDA, Winter 1974) are considered the most brilliant periods of Chinese history. During the Tang Dynasty the country was peaceful and well-ordered. Agricultural production bloomed and an efficient tax system provided the government with immense revenues. Supported by this wealth Chinese armies expanded the Empire north, west and south.

Expansion westward exposed large parts of Central Asia to Chinese political and cultural influence, and made contact with India and Western Asia easier than it had been for over 500 years. Chinese silks and ceramics were exchanged for the wonders of the West: raw jade, amber, grape wine, dancing girls. Buddhism had already become established in China, but Tang pilgrims to India brought back many unfamiliar Buddhist texts and the ability to translate them into Chinese. The impetus this gave to Buddhist philosophy in China generated new schools, Zen among them.

The terminus of the route from the West was the capital, Changan, at that time undoubtedly the greatest city in the world. The name of Changan first appears during the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.—A.D. 24), when a new capital was built some miles south-east of the old Qin dynasty capital, Xianyang, on the banks of the River Wei in Shensi Province.





Wall painting from the Yong tai tomb (replica): courtiers and ladies

The Big Wild Goose Pagoda in today's Sian; built in A.D. 652, rebuilt A.D. 930

It remained the capital only until the end of the Western Han Dynasty, but continued to be an administrative centre long afterwards. In A.D. 582 the Sui Emperor founded his new capital here and called it Daxing Cheng. The architect whom he put in charge of planning, Yu Wenkai, decided the plan of the old city was too irregular and laid out a new city.

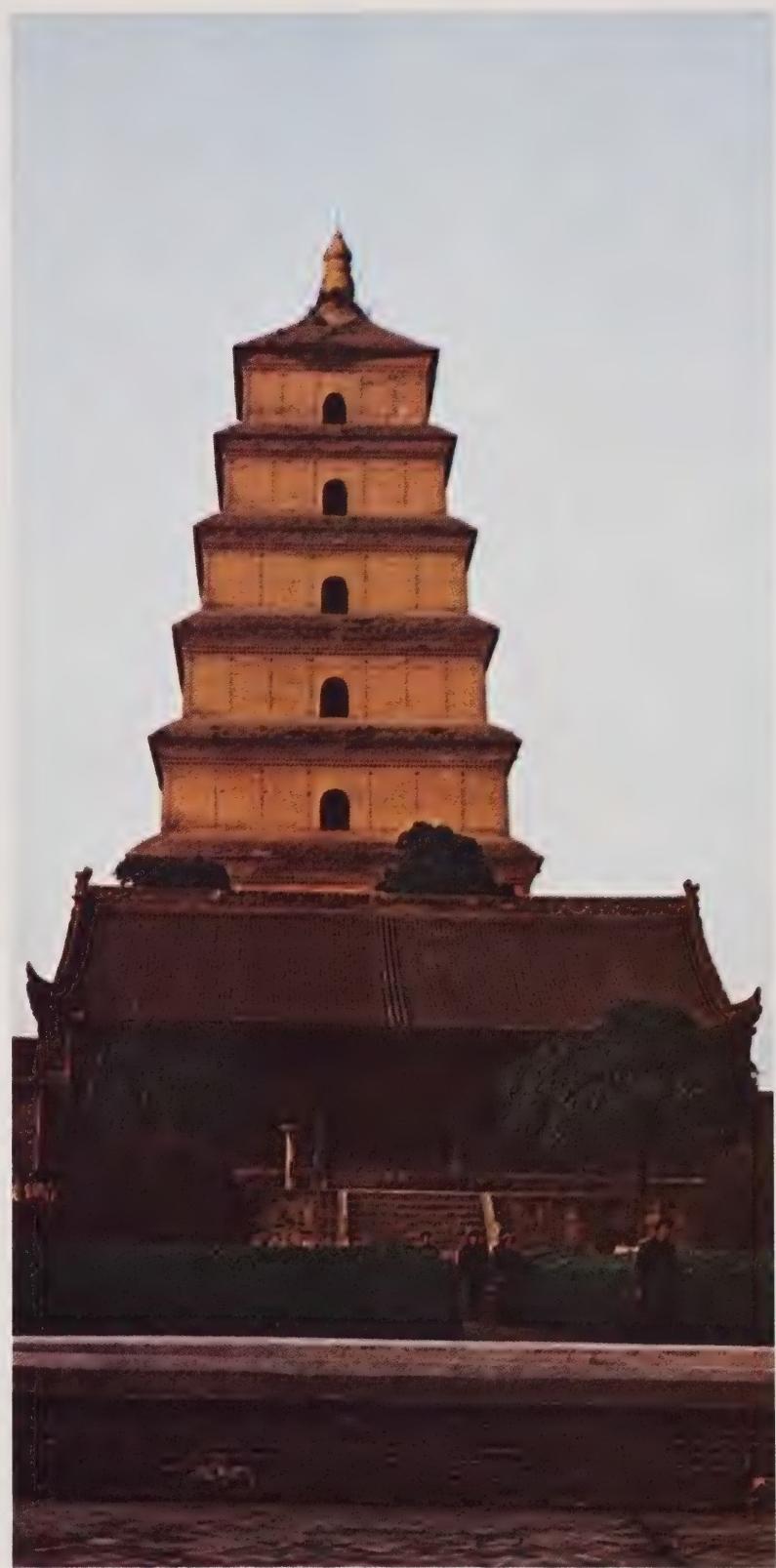
When the Tang Dynasty came to power in A.D. 618, they took over their predecessors' capital and returned to it the name Changan.

The city had about a million inhabitants and formed a vast rectangle oriented to the cardinal points of the compass. It measured about 6 miles east to west and 5 miles north to south, and was enclosed by a wall 17½

feet high made of rammed earth faced with brick. There were 8 gates to the north and 3 on each of the other sides. The city was divided into three main parts: the palace, the imperial city and the outer town. The palace was situated in the centre of the north wall of the city and enclosed by a wall of its own. South of the palace was the imperial city, the seat of the administration; it was walled on only three sides, being separated from the palace on the north by a wide avenue. The outer town was the residential area; eleven east-west streets and fourteen north-south divided it into 108 districts called *fang*, each one walled. The main avenue that ran from the principal city gate in the centre of the south wall to the middle gate of the imperial city divided the outer town into an eastern and a western section, each with its own market. The eastern market, not far from the mansions of the nobles and officials, was apparently the more luxurious. The western market was noisier, more vulgar and more violent. It was in this area that the foreign merchants lived. Recent excavations here have turned up coins from as far away as Byzantium, as well as pearls, ornaments in agate and crystal, and toilet articles. Both markets were divided into nine parts, the central one occupied by the administration of the market, and each of the others by a different trade.

The palace inside the city was not the only palace built for the Tang emperors. Their largest and most famous palace was the Daming gong, built in A.D. 662 just outside the north wall of the town, and linked to it by five gates. The palace complex was composed of about thirty buildings set in a landscaped park.

The only visible remains of Tang Dynasty Changan are the Big and Little Wild Goose Pagodas. The latter is all that remains of the temple founded in A.D. 684 by the Empress Wu in honour of her husband the Emperor Gao



Silver ewer with gilded repoussé dancing horse, holding a cup in its teeth

Agate cup with head of a water buffalo forming the handle

zong. The Big Wild Goose Pagoda was built in A.D. 652 to house the Buddhist texts brought back from India by the pilgrim Xuanzang. It originally had five stories, and five more were added between 701 and 704. Sometime between 704 and 930, when it was rebuilt, it suffered extensive damage, including the destruction of the top three stories. The pagoda as it stands today is the result of several more restorations through the centuries. It is built of yellowish brick on a mud core and each storey is marked externally by several rows of corbelled bricks forming a simple cornice. It is more or less solid, but there is an interior staircase giving access to the window-like openings on each



level. The total height of the pagoda is 192 feet.

The city was largely destroyed in A.D. 904 and was rebuilt during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) on the site occupied by the modern city of Sian.

The Tang Dynasty was founded in A.D. 618 by Li Yuan and his son Li Shimin. During their reigns, control of the country was consolidated, a land distribution gave everyone a certain amount of land to farm, the tax system was reformed, and the roles of state colleges and open examinations in staffing the civil service were expanded.

When Li Shimin died his empress and concubines followed the established custom of entering

a convent. But his successor, the Emperor Gao zong, took the very irregular step of rescuing one of them, Wu Zetian, and she became one of his favorites. Some time later she convinced him that her daughter had been murdered by the empress. The empress was imprisoned and later cruelly executed, and Wu was made empress in her stead. After Gao zong's death in 685, Wu Zetian became ruler of China, first as regent and then independently. She was the only woman in Chinese history ever to rule in her own right. In spite of the unorthodoxy of her position the Empire remained stable. She had some excellent ministers and was able to maintain central power over

the aristocracy. In 705 she abdicated, died and was buried in the great tomb of her husband Gao zong.

Chinese tombs, in so far as possible, reflected the life and desires of the living. Thus, the larger and richer burials so far discovered in the environs of Tang Changan are among the most important primary documents for Tang life as well as art. First of those recently excavated is the tomb of the princess Yong tai, granddaughter of Gao zong and the Empress Wu. According to her tombstone the Princess died in childbirth at nineteen. Historical records have it, however, that she was killed by order of Wu, then reigning, and that she was reunited with her husband in this fairer burial only in 706, by which time her father was on the throne.

The Yong tai tomb, part of the extensive tomb complex of the Gao zong Emperor in Qian County, Shensi, about thirty miles northwest of Sian, was excavated between 1960 and 1962. Above ground is a truncated pyramidal mound of medium size within sight of the great tumulus or *ling* of the Emperor. The outer path to the grave or "Spirit Way" is defined by human attendants and

animal guardians in stone. Accessible through a modern entrance, the Yong tai tomb comprises: a down-slanting grave ramp punctuated by six light wells, to either side of which are small side-chambers or wall-niches; a level passage under the mound with beehive-shaped antechamber; and, through a stone doorway and last brief passage, the square tomb chamber itself.

The tomb interior is now lit by bare but strategically hung light bulbs. Between the fourth and fifth wells of the ramp one comes upon the Princess' epitaph stone—square and low, with the official story of her life and death engraved in clear Tang characters in the dark grey stone. This is covered by another slab with truncated pyramidal top showing the Yong tai name, in the antique seal script of the later Bronze Age in the centre, and engraved Tang decoration on the sides. In the tomb chamber is still the rectangular grey stone outer sarcophagus in architectural shrine form. Two of its slabs have been left displaced, as they were long ago by the entry of thieves (one of whom was apparently killed or trapped and abandoned by the others with some of the stolen

articles in the grave passage). The compositions on the sides of this sarcophagus, of courtiers and ladies in fine engraved lines, are among the most exquisitely sensuous renderings in all of Chinese art.

Also still in the tomb, in the wall niches beside the ramp, are glazed and unglazed pottery and many of the over 800 tomb figurines with which the tomb was originally furnished. The remainder, as well as the few gold, iron and jade objects found in the tomb, are now in the Shensi Provincial Museum in Sian.

Unprecedented among earlier discoveries and collections of Tang art are the Yong tai tomb wall paintings. As the earth which filled the interior of the tomb was carefully removed it was seen that the entire tomb complex was variously and once brightly painted. The architectural framework for figural and decorative schemes was done in red. Vaulted ceilings were painted with stylized lotus "rosettes" in a trellis framework. The descending ramp's east wall shows a large dragon in Tang "cauliflower" clouds, followed by fragments of architecture and clusters of male figures. A complementary scheme on the west wall of the ramp is





introduced by the Chinese great tiger of the west. The swaying, aristocratic court ladies illustrated are from the walls of the antechamber. A few faded but still beautiful fragments of the original painting remain *in situ*—clouds, flowers and vines, birds, parts of figures and architecture. The best preserved and most important of the wall paintings have been removed to the Sian Museum, however, for conservation and preservation. The paintings now in the tomb are mainly careful, if startlingly bright, replicas.

The next great ruler was Wu's grandson Xuan zong, who is known as Ming huang—the Shining Emperor. During his reign, Chinese culture reached one of its peaks. All the arts—painting, sculpture, ceramics, gold and silver-produced strong and graceful works. And the poetry of this period was the greatest in all of Chinese history. Among the many famous poets of the time, Du Fu and Li Bai stand out.

Li Bai was a fluent court poet and a heavy drinker. In his youth he had studied Taoist mysticism with a hermit. His contemporaries thought him a bit wild, but his po-

etry was so beautiful that they forgave his excesses:

#### For Myself

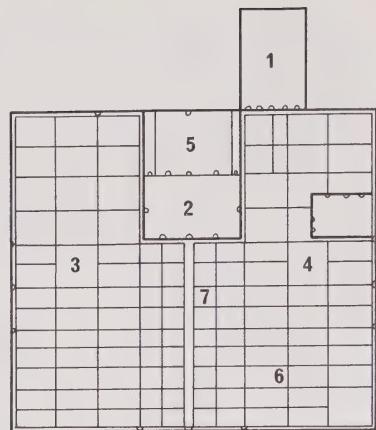
*Drinking, I did not notice the gathering darkness:*

*Fallen flowers covered my robe.  
I swayed to my feet and walked  
by the moonlit stream,  
The birds had roosted and other  
men were few.*

He died, legend has it, by drowning: he fell out of a boat while trying to grasp the moon's reflection in the water.

Du Fu was a more scholarly poet. He held several posts in the civil service, but spent much of his life in poverty. His poetry shows a more serious attitude than that of Li Bai.

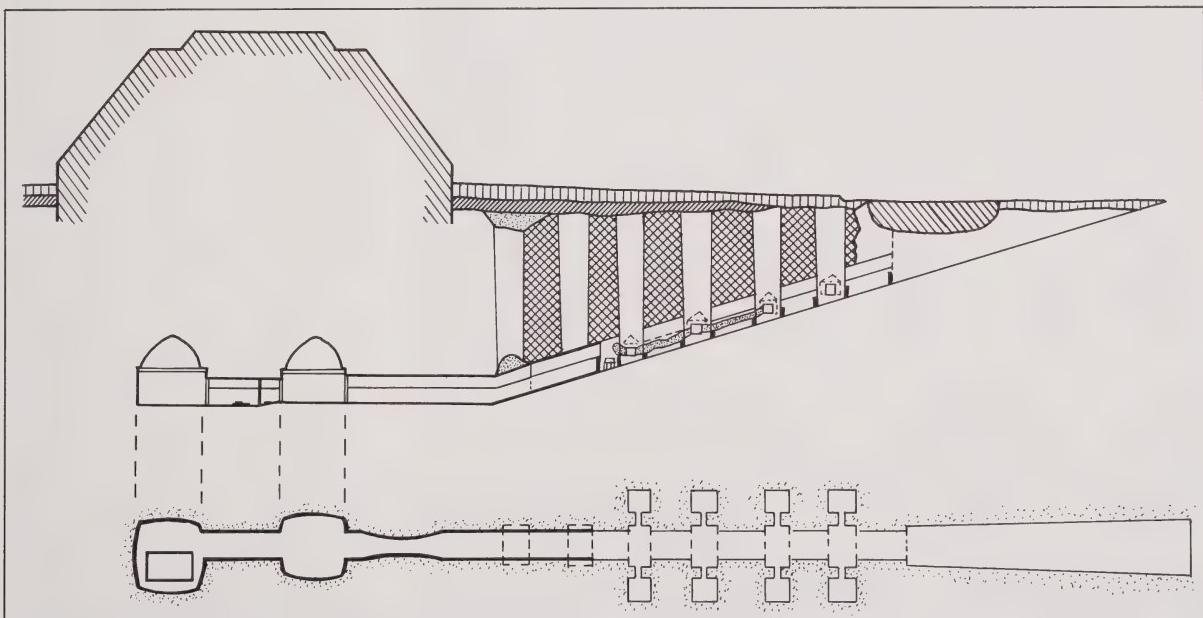
The Imperial Court was the centre of the cultural life of the time, the greatest of many salons. Emissaries of foreign kingdoms were constantly arriving with new wonders. Poets performed for the aristocracy, and they in turn held extemporaneous poetry competitions among themselves. The women of the emperor's household burst free of many traditional restrictions in the direction of liberty and luxury. Central Asian

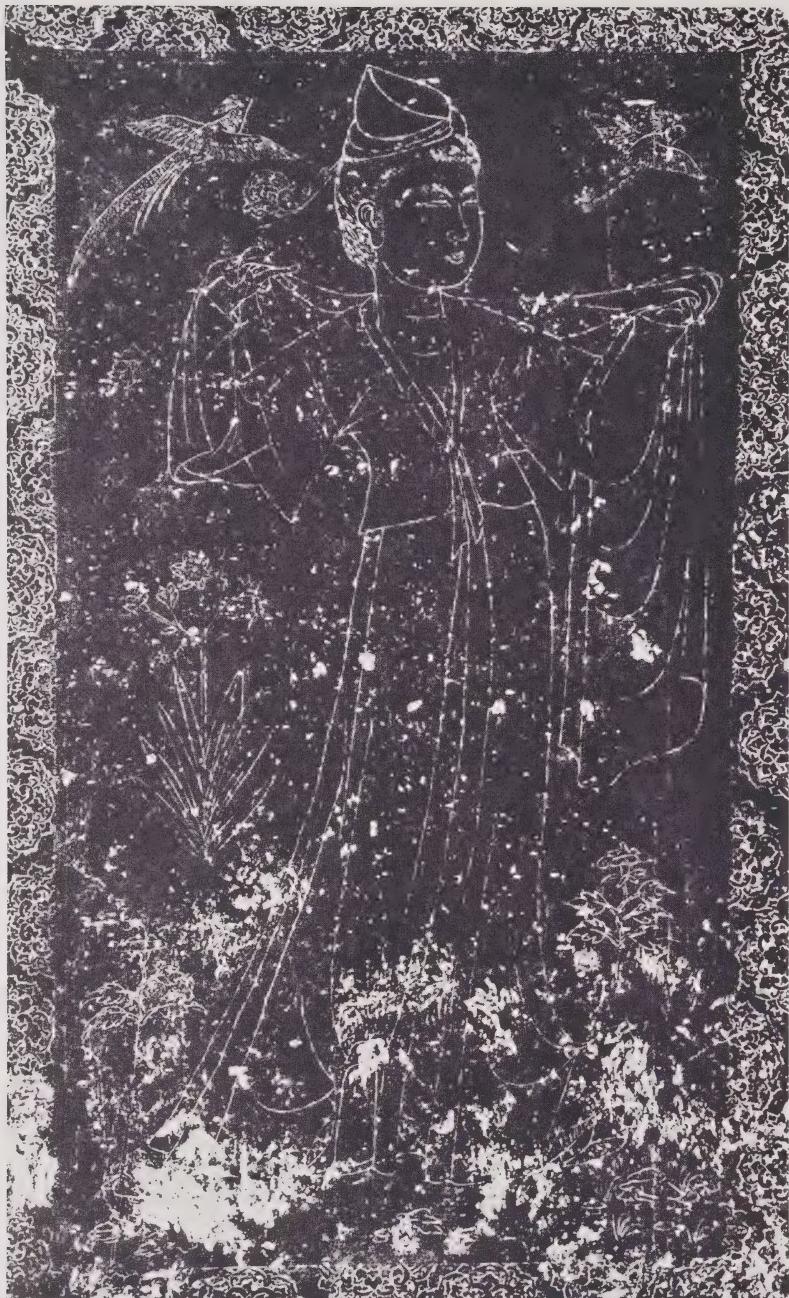


0 5 km  
 1 Daming Gong 6 Big Wild Goose  
 2 Imperial City Pagoda  
 3 West Market 7 Small Wild  
 4 East Market Goose Pagoda  
 5 Palace

Plan of the Tang capital Chang'an; below, a cross-sectional plan of the tomb of the Princess Yong tai, A.D. 706. Drawings by Claus Breede

Three-colour glazed earthenware figures of ladies; their elaborate coiffures, beauty spots, narrow sleeves and long pleated skirts are all imported modes (opposite)





Engraved figure of a lady, from the stone sarcophagus of the Princess Yong tai; on the opposite page, a figure from the original Yong tai tomb wall painting

styles of dress created new fads, foreign musicians brought new styles of music. Court women rode out hunting and sporting on horseback, and thought nothing of being seen by men other than the emperor.

Outside the palace there was a similarly wealthy and leisured aristocracy. The production of luxury goods became an extremely important industry. In the fall of 1970, two large pottery jars and a smaller silver one were unearthed in the southern suburbs of Sian. The jars contained over a thousand objects, including 270 gold and silver utensils, sets of jade belt plaques, imported luxury items, silver ingots and Chinese and foreign currency and drugs.

This treasure trove has provided archaeologists and historians with much information on Tang China. The gold and silver coins from Japan, Iran and Byzantium, the glass bowl, rock crystal cup and agate rhyton of foreign manufacture, the imported semi-precious stones and medicinal litharge (an oxide of lead) from Iran all evince the internationality of Tang commerce and culture. In matters of government and finance, the inscriptions on the vessels and ingots have made possible the computation of the Tang ounce, suggested the existence of a commercial tax, and substantiated the records of the translation of the taxes paid in cloth and labour into monetary payments. The drugs, graded, neatly labelled and packed in gold and silver boxes, testify to the importance attached to them. According to a Tang pharmacopeia, the drugs—amethyst, quartz, coral, amber, cinnabar, stalactite and powdered gold—were believed to "tranquillize the spirit, renew the vital energy and sharpen the eyesight, strengthen the five viscera and fortify the spirit".

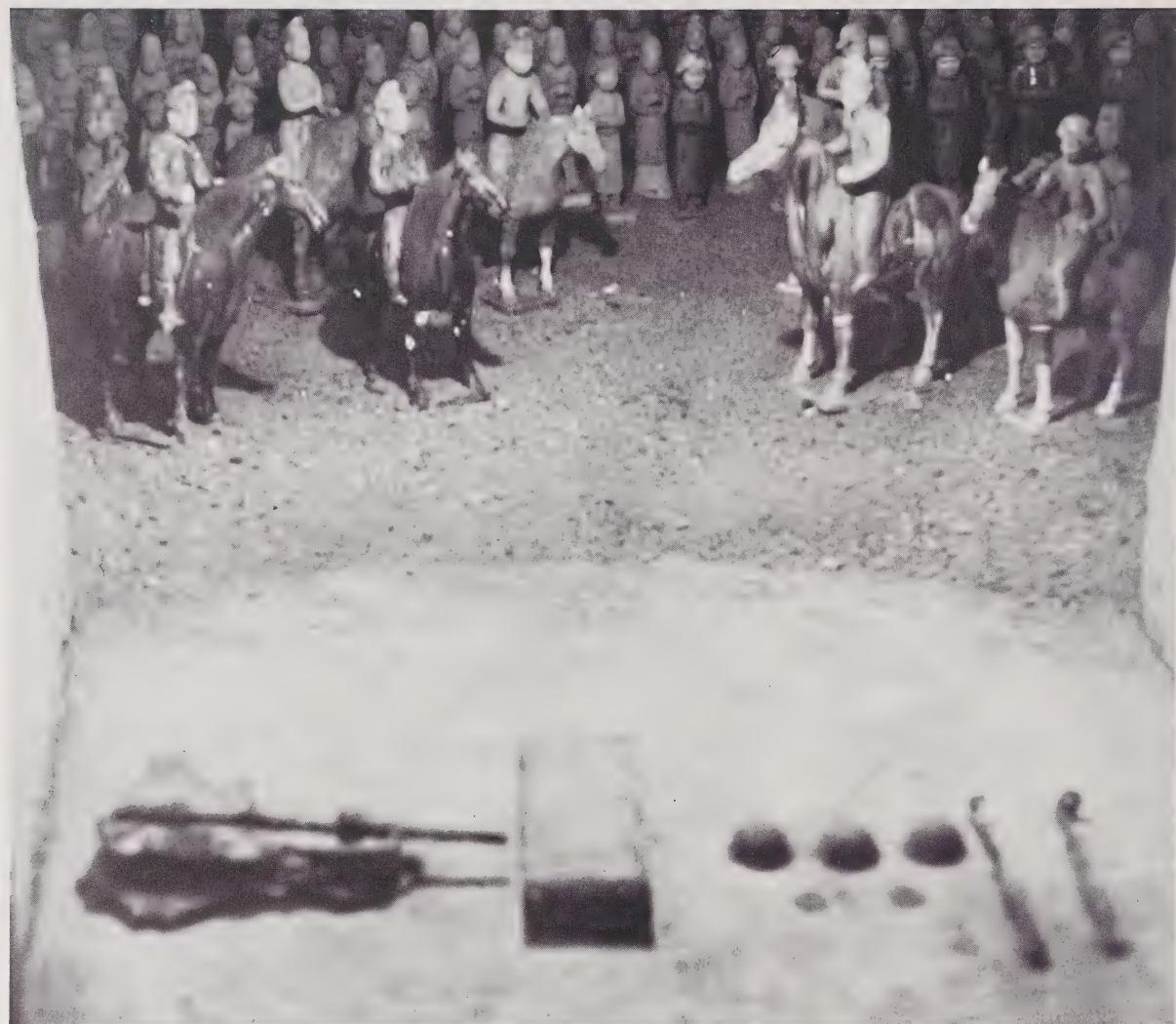
But the gold and silver vessels, locks and ornaments must take pride of place. The quality, variety and excellence of workmanship of the vessels, in particular, are outstanding. Many of the shapes,

techniques and decorative motifs were learned from Sassanian vessels imported from Iran and from refugee Iranian craftsmen who settled in Changan; but the Chinese subtly adapted them to native taste. Most of the vessels are hammered from sheet metal, and many were finished on a primitive lathe. The decoration is primarily chased or repoussé, often standing out against a ring-matted ground. A few have engraved detail, and others are formed from delicate openwork. A particularly fine example of this is the silver sphere containing a small cup on gimbals for burning incense to perfume bedding or clothes. Soldering was widely employed in construction and decoration. Ornamental discs are soldered to the bottoms of bowls, complex patterns of filigree and granulation are attached to a gold comb-top, and cloisons for the inlay of semi-precious stones are set on the sides of a gold cup. Repoussé and chasing leave their marks on the reverse of the surface decorated, and to hide this and give the impression of a more massive piece of metal, linings were often soldered into cups and bowls, leaving seams almost impossible to detect. Many of the silver pieces are gilded. A ewer in the form of a leather bag is decorated on each side with a gilded repoussé horse with back legs bent and a cup held in its teeth. An early 8th century story may illuminate the source of this motif. It tells of a banquet spread for some Tibetans who were astonished when entertainment was provided by a troupe of beautifully caparisoned horses, trained to perform to music. Half way through their act, the musicians filled cups with wine which the horses took up in their mouths. They then lay down, and got up again, with the cups in their mouths.

No inscriptions tell us who the owner of this treasure was, but Chinese archaeologists have advanced a most plausible candidate. He must have been a man of



Wall niche in the Yong tai tomb, with iron objects and tomb figurines



great wealth, for the intrinsic value of the jade and gold and silver, exclusive of ingots and coins, was equivalent to the taxes (paid in grain) of 150,000 men in a year. Through deductions based on texts and on improved knowledge of the geography of Tang Changan, the site of the excavation of the hoard has been identified as the erstwhile property of Li Shouli, Prince of Bin and cousin of the Emperor Xuan zong. In 756 a subordinate of the rebel An Lushan attacked Changan, forcing the flight of Xuan zong and his supporters to the western prov-

ince of Szechwan. Li Shouli had died in 741, but perhaps the new Prince of Bin hurriedly buried his treasure and joined the exodus. Whoever buried it must have died with his secret, inadvertently preserving for today this monument to the artistry and craftsmanship of Tang metalworkers.

The brilliant luxury of the Emperor Xuan zong's court is often associated with his love for the concubine Yang Guifei. She was a plump beauty who was his son's concubine until the over-60-year-old emperor saw her bathing in a hot spring at the Huaqing

Palace near Changan, and took her for his own. Their love is described in a poem by Bai Juyi, "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow":

*In the cool of spring she bathed in  
the Huaqing Pool,  
The warm water washed her  
smooth flesh.  
Servant girls supporting her, she  
was lovely, weak,-  
It was then she first received im-  
perial favour.*

*Cloudy tresses, flower face, gold  
ornaments swayed from her hair,*

Warm behind the hibiscus curtain they passed the spring nights.

They hated the spring nights' shortness, the sun rising high,  
Because of this the emperor's dawn court was no longer held.

Pleasures and banquets continued unceasing,

In spring she followed his spring excursions, at night she alone was his.

In the back palace three thousand beautiful women,  
Enough love for three thousand all on one

But Xuan zong's brilliant reign was the beginning of a decline in the fortunes of the Dynasty. Provincial governors began to rule in their own interests rather than those of the throne, and even tried to pass their positions on to their heirs. The great land-owning families used their power and influence to take peasants' land as payment for debts, incorporate it into their own estates, rent it back in return for a large part of what it produced, and avoid paying taxes on it. Many peasants became destitute refugees. Imperial tax revenues decreased; border wars in the early 700s led to heavy taxation of those who weren't powerful enough to avoid paying, and to conscription. An Lushan, a personal favorite of Yang Guifei, led a temporarily successful rebellion against the throne and Xuan zong was forced

to flee from the capital. The soldiers of the Imperial Guard blamed Guifei for his downfall and forced him to have her executed as they fled. An's rebellion was eventually ended, but the authority of the Dynasty was never completely re-established.

#### Spring Prospect

The State is broken: mountains and rivers remain,  
The city wall in spring: deep with plants and trees.  
Grieving the times, the flowers draw forth my tears,  
Desolate over parting, the birds shock my heart.

Beacon-fires alight for three straight months,  
A letter from home would be worth ten thousand gold-pieces.  
My white hair is worn thin with care,  
And will not hold the hairpin of a cap of office.

(Du Fu)

There were frequent popular uprisings, and in 881 rebels under Huang Zhao took the capital for a while. In 904, Changan was completely devastated, and in 907 the last emperor of Tang abdicated. A period of seventy years of chaos and competition for the throne began, which ended in 979 with the triumph of the Song Dynasty. Du Fu's "Spring Prospect", about Xuan zong in exile had been a harbinger of worse times to come. ♦

This article resulted from the co-operative efforts of members of the Chinese Archaeological Research Team of the ROM's Far Eastern Department: (from left to right) Patricia Proctor, Doris Dohrenwend, Greg Whincup and Sara Irwin. Under the direction of Barbara Stephen, they are making preparations for the exhibition of recent archaeological discoveries from the Peoples' Republic of China which will open at the Museum on August 8 and run until November 16.

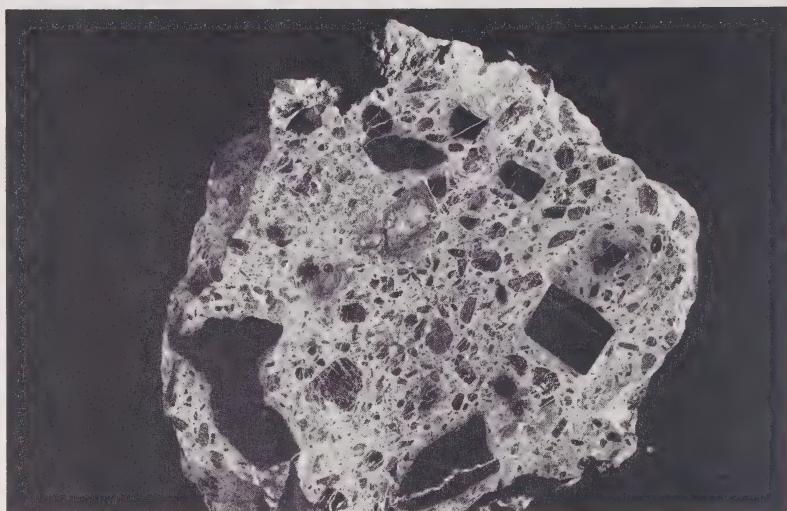
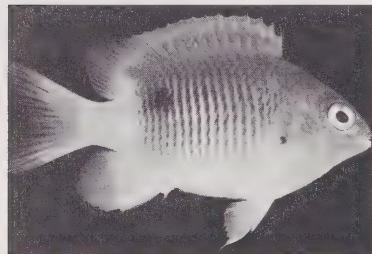
Epitaph stone in the Yong tai tomb



Photographs, pages 21, 22, 23, 30 and 31, by D. Dohrenwend.

# The Growing Collections

Six 20-gallon containers of colourful reef fishes belonging to the family Pomacentridae have been received from Oceanographic Sorting Centre, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Dr. Alan R. Emery, Associate Curator in the Department of Ichthyology and Herpetology, is a world authority on this group of beautiful tropical fishes. This large collection from the Indian Ocean, Red Sea and Oceania was sent to Dr. Emery for identification and to assist him in his studies of the evolution of the Pomacentridae. ♀



A large variety of rock specimens has recently been added to the Geology collections. A research collection of more than 1,500 specimens from the Precambrian Shield of Ontario was donated by Dr. S.B. Lumbers upon joining the Department of Geology in September. The collection features several suites of rocks illustrating the stratigraphy, metamorphism, and plutonism of the Grenville Province, and will form the nucleus of a comprehensive petrologic reference collection on the Precambrian of Ontario. Suites of volcanic and other rocks from Great Britain, Mexico, California and Hawaii were also donated by Dr. Lumbers.

Last fall, Dr. Lumbers and Dr. R.I. Gait of the Department of Mineralogy collected over 400 specimens of kimberlite (one shown here) and associated rocks from the renowned diamond-producing pipes of the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho, during field excursions run in conjunction with the First International Kimberlite Conference. De Beers Consoli-

dated Mines Limited allowed the conference delegates the most unrestricted access to their mines ever accorded to a group of visiting geologists. To date, only half of the collection has been received, including suites from the Premier Mine northeast of Pretoria, the De Beers, Wesselton and Dutoitspan Mines near Kimberly, and several mines near Koffiefontein, Barkly West, and Boshof. Several varieties of nodular inclusions that have important implications concerning the petrology of the Earth's mantle were obtained from various kimberlite pipes.

Dr. Mitsuo Hashimoto, Curator of Petrology, National Science Museum, Tokyo, presented a suite of 17 rocks from the Hakone Volcano, Japan. Mr. Basil Rosa donated a large specimen of lava from Mt. Etna, Italy.

Mr. Brian Breton, son of the late Mr. Aime Breton, the original discoverer of the important Elliot Lake Uranium deposits, donated the geiger counter used by his father in making the discovery. The geiger counter will be incorporated into the Blind River display in the Geology Gallery. ♀

**T**extiles of various types played an important role in spice trade during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. In the East, fabrics were bartered for spices; in the West they were prized in their own right.

The ROM's holdings of Indian chintz and embroideries from India and China made for the European market during the late 17th and 18th centuries are of international significance. The acquisition of a magnificent cope of rare 16th century Chinese silk (973.422) enhances those collections. It is of crimson satin figured in blue and yellow with brocaded accents in gilt paper, one of the so-called "Macao silks" which were exported to Europe by the Portuguese during the last half of the 16th and early 17th century, when Macao was a major entrepôt for the lucrative spice trade. Although of Chinese manufacture, its design, featuring the double-headed eagle crest of the Habsburg monarchs (detail shown here), demonstrates the conscious modification of Oriental decoration to accommodate Western expectations and to ensure commercial appeal. The crest strongly suggests that this silk was commissioned for the Spanish market, and dates from the period of Portugal's unification with Spain (1580-1640).

The Textile Department's collection of European weaving has been enriched by a varied group ranging in date from the 13th to the 20th centuries and originating in Italy, France, Spain and Germany. All are important pieces, either filling gaps or strengthening areas of particular interest. The earliest is a small fragment woven in Spain in the 13th century. The rarest is of about 1500 from Nuremberg, Germany. It has decorative bands

in brown showing houses, birds, and other simple motifs against a patterned ground of the most exquisite bleached white linen. In striking contrast is a length of red velvet with a bold sweeping pattern in gold, a stunning and typical example of 16th century Italian design. Two ecclesiastical vestments of early 18th century brocaded silk are large, impressive and very beautiful, and a sample piece in mint condition woven in 1901, by the famous Lyon silk weaving firm of Tassinari et Chatel, adds another important piece to our collection in the popular Art Nouveau style. ♦





The Far Eastern Department's first acquisition of 1974 is an admirable addition to the museum's collection of 18th and 19th century Japanese paintings of the literati school (*bunjinga*, also called *nanga*). Works by this school were disliked by early Western scholars of Japanese art, but they are now appreciated as much in the West as in Japan.

The recently acquired painting (974.6) is a hanging scroll in ink and light colours on silk, by Hirose Seifū, called Daizan (1751-1813). He was of the *samurai* class and his clan was located in Mimasaka (present-day

Okayama prefecture, between Kyoto and Hiroshima). Daizan served his clan as an official. Unlike many Japanese painters of this school, he exemplifies the ideal literati painter defined by 17th century Chinese painting theorists, painting only as a pastime and to present his own nature and feelings to others. The ROM's Daizan is dated to 1806. It is a mountain landscape with a misty valley, rushing waterfall and cascading river. A Chinese scholar sits in a small pavilion admiring the view; two other scholars cross a bridge, followed by a servant carrying a zither. ♦



A series of 12 specimens of zeolites from Poona, India, is the focal point of the 133 specimens added to the Mineralogy collections since November 1973. The Poona specimens are composed of various combinations of apophyllite, stilbite, heulandite, mordenite and scolecite. A fine scolecite specimen with crystals up to 7 cm long is illustrated here.

Four species new to the collection, cliffordite, schmitterite, moctezumite and poughite (synthetic) were obtained through exchange with Dr. R.V. Gaines, Pottstown, Pa., and two others, akatoreite and wyllieite, were purchased.

Among several presentations were three specimens of xonotlite

from Newfoundland and Quebec, made by Ann Sabina, Geological Survey, Ottawa; one specimen of palygorskite from California, by Dr. G.V. Henderson, Pomona, California; 14 fine crystals of bixbyite from Mexico, by Dr. D.H. Gorman, University of Toronto; and five specimens of pyrite from Cyprus, by Mr. More and Mr. Chrysostomon, Cyprus. This last presentation was arranged by Dr. A.D. Tushingham, Chief Archaeologist.

The department was very pleased to receive the geological and mineralogical library of the late Dr. M.E. Hurst, former Director of the Geological Branch of the Ontario Department of Mines. The books were presented by Mrs. M.E. Hurst. ♦



The Canadiana Department has recently acquired an excellent and rare late 17th-century Quebec panel and baluster-back armchair. The chair (973.395), of mixed maple and pine, is a post-mediaeval French form with turned Louis XIII base structure, of which few Quebec examples survive. ♦

# Recent Publications

A tug on the line—a splash in the landing net—but what have you caught? The National Museums of Canada have recently published an angler's companion, *A Guide to the Freshwater Sport of Fishes of Canada*, that will tell you. Rugged and conveniently sized for the pocket or tackle box, the book illustrates each entry by a careful drawing from actual specimens, and gives its usual distribution, feeding habits, and customary angling methods. There is information on licencing and regulations, canoeing and boating, travel, and artificial respiration—as well as what to do both before and after you have caught your fish. The book appears in both an English and a French edition. A GUIDE TO THE FRESHWATER SPORT FISHES OF CANADA/POISSONS DE PÊCHE SPORTIVE D'EAU DOUCE DU CANADA; D.E. McAllister and E.J. Crossman; National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, 1973; 107 pages; \$3.75.

Material Culture and Art in the Star Harbour Region, Eastern Solomon Islands; ROM Ethnography Monograph 1; Sidney M. Mead; 72 pages, illustrated; \$4.00

Cuir Doré Hangings in the Royal Ontario Museum; ROM History, Technology and Art Monograph 2; Ladislav Cselenyi; 30 pages, illustrated; \$3.00

Excavations at Actun Polbilche, Belize; ROM Archaeology Monograph 1; David M. Pendergast; 104 pages, illustrated; \$4.00

A Small Collection of Bifaces From Wabatonguishi Lake, Algoma District, Ontario; ROM Archaeology Monograph 2; Peter L. Storck; 24 pages; \$2.00

Excavation at Fengate, Peterborough, England: the First Report; ROM Archaeology Monograph 3; Francis Pryor; 52 pages, illustrated; \$3.00

Excavations of the Godin Project: Second Progress Report; ROM Art and Archaeology Occasional Paper 26; T. Cuyler Young, Jr., and Louis D. Levine; 168 pages, illustrated; \$4.50

Two Palaeo-indian Projectile Points From The Bronte Creek Gap, Halton County, Ontario; ROM Archaeology Paper 1; Peter L. Storck; 4 pages; 50¢

Communal Hierarchy and Significance of Environmental Parameters for Brachiopods: The New Zealand Permian Model; ROM Life Sciences Contribution 92; J. Bruce Waterhouse; 50 pages; \$2.00

Differential Growth in Three Ichthyosaurs: *Ichthyosaurus communis*, *I. breviceps* and *Stenopterygius*

*quadriscissus* (Reptilia, Ichthyosauria); ROM Life Sciences Contribution 93; C. McGowan; 22 pages; \$2.00

Contributions to the Systematics of the Caddisfly Family Limnephilidae (Trichoptera). I; ROM Life Sciences Contribution 94; G.B. Wiggins; 32 pages; \$2.00

Mammals from the St. Mary River Formation (Cretaceous) of Southwestern Alberta; Life Sciences Contribution 95; Robert E. Sloan and Loris S. Russell; 22 pages; \$2.00

Ecological and Behavioural Evidence for the Systematic Status of New Zealand Oystercatchers (Charadriiformes: Haematopodidae); ROM Life Sciences contribution 96; Allan J. Baker; 34 pages; \$2.00

A Revision of the Longipinnate Ichthyosaurs of the Lower Jurassic of England, with Descriptions of Two New Species (Reptilia: Ichthyosauria); ROM Life Sciences Contribution 97; C. McGowan; 40 pages; \$1.50

Electrophoretic Patterns of Serum Proteins of Neotropical Bats (Chiroptera); ROM Life Sciences Contribution 98; Dario Valdivieso and J.R. Tamsitt; 24 pages; \$1.25

A New Species of *Glauconycteris* (Vespertilionidae, Chiroptera); ROM Life Sciences Occasional Paper 22; R.L. Peterson and Donald A. Smith; 10 pages; 75¢

Three New Species of Labidocarpine Mites (Listrophoroidea, Chirodiscidae) from Puerto Rican Bats; ROM Life Sciences Occasional Paper 23; Jorge de la Cruz, J.R. Tamsitt and Dario Valdivieso; 16 pages; 75¢

Methods for the Collection, Preservation, and Study of Water Mites (Acari: Parasitengona); ROM Life Sciences Miscellaneous; David Barr; 28 pages; \$1.50

An Annotated Bibliography of the Chain Pickerel, *Esox Niger* (Osteichthyes: Salmoniformes); ROM Life Sciences Miscellaneous; E.J. Crossman and G.E. Lewis; 82 pages; \$2.50

Key to the Quaternary Pollen and Spores of the Great Lakes Region; ROM Life Sciences Miscellaneous; J.H. McAndrews, A.A. Berti and G. Norris; 61 pages; \$2.50

Publications listed above are available from the ROM or at the ROM Book and Gift Shop.

# The Chair in Europe

## A Short History

Heribert Hickl-Szabo

**C**hairs and armchairs are among the oldest known furniture or "moveables"—those parts of the interior of a house that can be moved, as opposed to fireplaces, doors and windows. Such moveables have been made in sets only comparatively recently, and in Europe the origins of the chair and the armchair differ.

The armchair developed from the throne, the official seat of royalty or of a church dignitary. Indeed, a throne-like chair in representations of the Annunciation was a symbolic indication of the Virgin's future title, "Queen of Heaven." The chair, on the other hand, is descended from the stool, which was intended for people of lesser social importance, and from the somewhat more comfortable backstool.

Light weight is important in a "movable," and many surviving examples are collapsible. Folding stools—faldstools—were used by the nobility on hunting forays or military campaigns. The scissors chair of about 1500 was popular for longer than its contemporary, a folding backstool. Both were light-weight, but the scissors chair was obviously more comfortable.

The throne-like box-bottom chair of about the same time was not so easily moved as its successor, an armchair of about 1525-35, which discarded the heavy box bottom for an open scaffolding of uprights and floor-level stretchers.

Italy long held the lead in furniture styles and comfort. But two examples from mid-16th century France, in what is termed "Henri II" style, show that with the Renaissance France was breaking free from the prevailing Gothic fashion. Italy nevertheless continued to lead in interior decoration, and towards the end of the century straight arm rests began to be replaced by shaped ones, backs were more and more comfortably canted, and Baroque scrolls and claw feet began to

adorn the chair.

In the 17th century a variety of styles was introduced. At this time chairs and armchairs were first made in sets, for use in the hall, at the dining table, or for social gatherings. Italian cabinet-makers produced sets of the "cartouche" chair, while in England sets of the so-called Yorkshire-Derbyshire chair were popular. About 1700 the fad for oriental motifs was reflected in furniture styles, as for example in the finely carved and gilded chair from Italy shown here.

The popularity of matching chairs and armchairs grew, and in France by 1720 whole rooms were decorated in the same manner. Tables, chairs, armchairs, footstools, settees, mirror frames, mantels, fire screens and the very panelling on the walls were carved with the same ornament. By now pre-eminence in furniture design had passed to France. Two chairs and a settee of about 1715-25, acquired in 1970 by the ROM, are entirely gilded with gold leaf, and upholstered with fine embroidery shot with silver threads. Such matching sets were not only comfortable but highly decorative works of art, indicating the wealth and luxury introduced by Louis XIV and carried over into the Régence style.

Furnishings were now considered to be works of art, and from this time on French furniture is signed. Etienne Dieudonné, among whose work is the butternut chair with caned seat and back, was a listed Master Ebéniste of Paris; the stained walnut armchair is signed by Nicole Blanchard, a similarly honoured craftsman. By mid-18th century everything in a fashionable drawingroom—whether a painting, a jardinière, or a piece of furniture—had to be decorative. In the Rococo style chairs displayed cabriole legs, flowing curves, and carving more restrained than that of the Régence.

About 1765 Rococo began to be replaced by the Louis XVI style. Cabriole legs gave way to either round or square tapering ones, and curves generally were displaced by corners or angles, often embellished by carved festoons.

At the end of the century, the Empire style (called, in England, Regency) was introduced. It harked back to what were considered Imperial Roman motifs. Chairs became delicate and squarish, with such neoclassical adornments as the lyre shape, stylized eagles, and supporting caryatids. Some time between 1820 and 1830, the growing wealth of the bourgeoisie inspired a new style, called in France Louis Philippe, and in Italy, Germany and Holland the Biedermeier style. It recalls the styles of the 18th century, but with obviously 19th-century embellishments.

On the continent the following period, equivalent to the later English Victorian era, has no single proper name. In the jargon of the trade in central Europe it is called "Jammer Barok" or sometimes "Hausmeister Barok," roughly translated as a caretaker style. By the first half of the 20th century this not yet antique but decidedly out-of-date style had gone down in the world to the point where it was furnishing servants' quarters—and the servant most accessible to the public was the caretaker. Such furniture is heavier than 18th century furniture, and a very ornate hodge-podge of everything 18th century.

The machine was replacing the cabinetmaker, and during the later 19th century, quality of craftsmanship was usual mainly in objects made in the Orient, where individual skill and inexpensive labour still existed. An example is the delicately turned and decorated chair of ivory, made in Indonesia for the continental market during the second half of the 19th century.

## A Gallery of Chairs



Ancestor of the armchair—Imperial throne of stone and bronze, from Goslar; Germany, about 1150.

(1) (2)

English or Flemish trestle stool, in oak (924.21.9), and (2) Italian backstool in walnut (courtesy of Mrs. Neda Leipen), both about 1450. Intended for lesser folk, and easily portable, the stool and the backstool were the forerunners of the side chair.



1

(3)

A backstool of about 1500, related to the scissors chair, and a type fairly common in north Italy and Switzerland but of short-termed popularity. This model (948x188) is in birch.

(4)

Faldstool of carved and painted pearwood (Austrian, c. 1230), probably used by the gentry in the open air or in a tent. Courtesy of the Museum for Applied Arts, Vienna.



2



3



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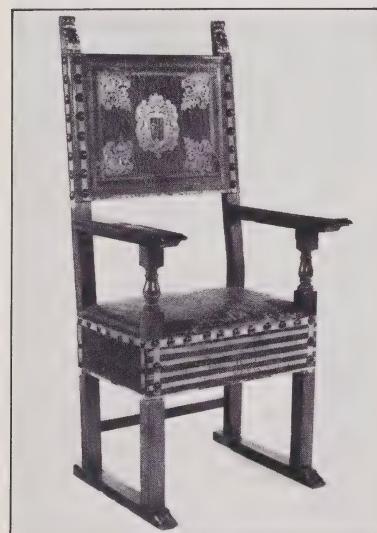
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7

(5)

Box-bottom or tub chair of oak; Italy, 1450-80 (L972.14.1, collection of Dr. W.M. Tovell). Compare the throne-like chair (above) on a black slate relief of the Annunciation, 1430-50, by Gaggini da Bissone.

(6)

Scissors chair (938.16.3) in birch, from Italy, c. 1500. The type is sometimes called Savonarola, Luther or Dagobert: such collapsible chairs may be of metal or of wood.

(7)

Upright armchair (Italian, c. 1525-35; 919.9.11) has discarded the heavy box-bottom for a scaffolding of uprights with stretchers. It is in walnut with gold-stamped leather on the back, and the leather seat offers a previously rare degree of comfort. The seat height suggests the use of a footstool for added comfort.

(8) (9)

"Henri II" armchairs from France, 1540-70. The first (936.16.2), in birch with upright back, is of fine and sophisticated construction. Its velvet covering is a concession to Italian inspiration, and the hexagonal uprights and armrests nod a farewell to the Gothic style. The second (936.16.7, next page) is in walnut with a wooden seat and velvet-covered back.



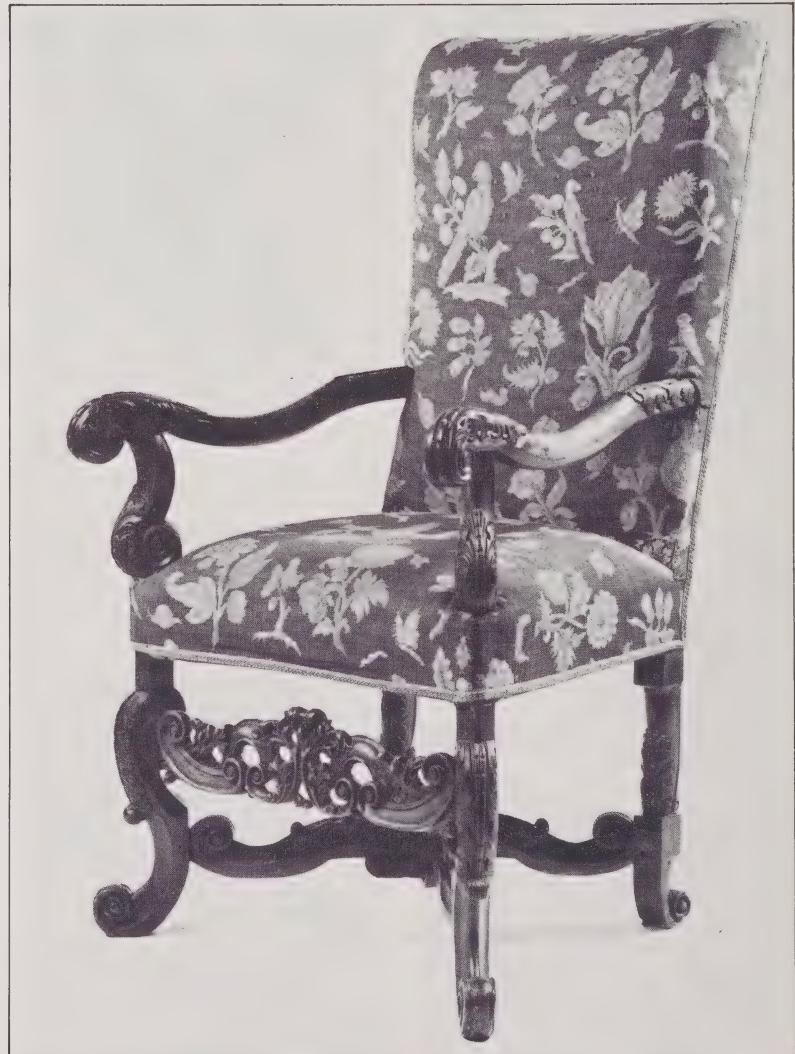
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12

(10)

Walnut armchair (919.9.6) dates from 1585-90 but still has the ball-turned stretchers of an earlier date. Shown without its leather-upholstered seat and back, it demonstrates the simplicity and beauty of Italian furniture making. The gilt carved finials of the slightly canted back replace the bronze decoration often used formerly.

(11)

Towards the end of the 16th century straight arm rests were replaced by shaped ones, often ending in imposing scrolls, and the canting of the back became more emphatic. This walnut armchair (Italian, 1640-50 (941.6.40) has claw feet—a concession to Baroque styles.

(12)

Armchair made in Italy, 1680-90, has scroll legs and cross stretchers, a carved apron, and well-padded seat and back. Walnut (941.6.39).



13

(13) (14)

Side chair and armchair of Louis XIII style, both in walnut with ball-turned frame and comfortable leather upholstery. The armchair (950.94.1) is Spanish or Italian, c. 1650-60, the side chair (927.23.2) is French, c. 1680. The prototype is evidently French, but such chairs are found in England, northern Spain and northern Italy.



14

(15) (16)

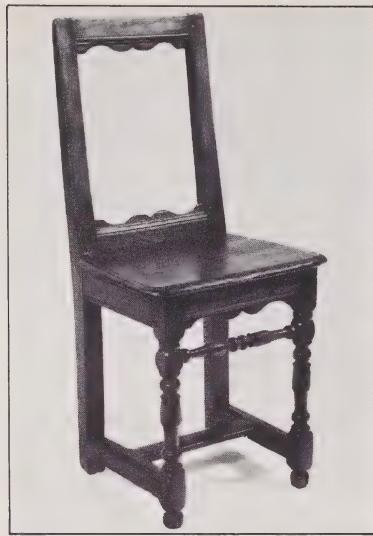
Sidechairs, second half of the 17th century. The "Cartouche" chair (919.9.15) in walnut is Italian, 1680-90; chairs and armchairs of this type were the first to be made in sets. At the same time England was producing sets of the Yorkshire-Derbyshire chair. The oak example with the crudely ball-turned stretcher (919.9.36) is dated about 1650.



15



16



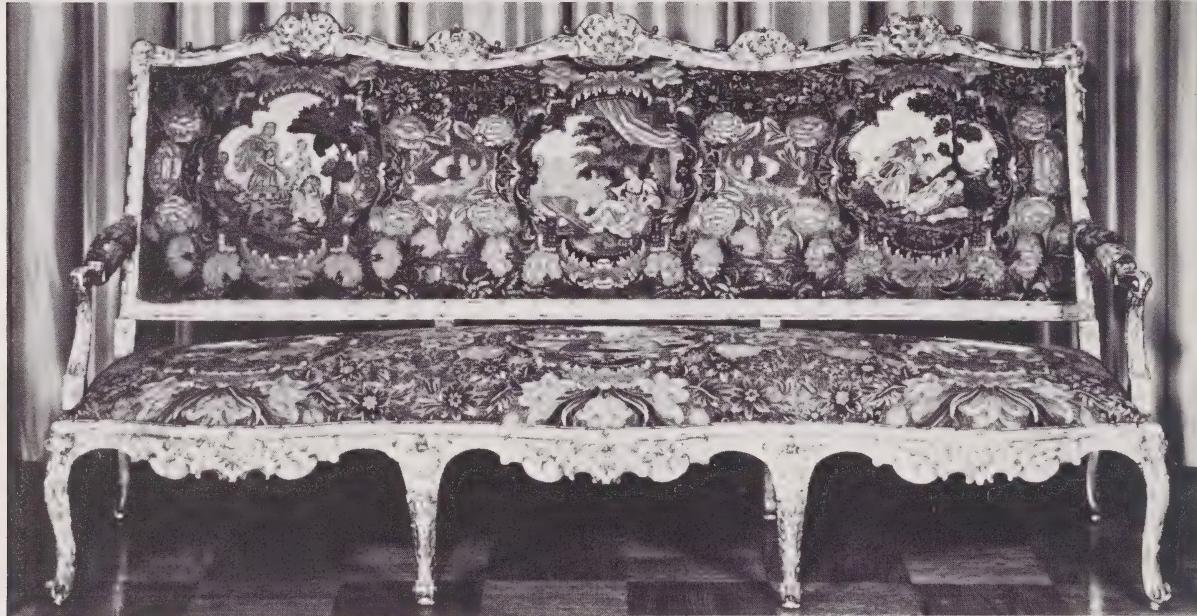
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19



20

## (17)

The "Lorraine chair," a small 17th century side chair which is easily moved and takes up little space. This example (965x38.3) is of oak. Such chairs were used to accommodate large numbers of people in small space, perhaps in a chapel with no fixed choir stalls, or in assembly rooms. The type inspired furniture making in New France, and later models were of walnut or even of beech.

## (18)

In provincial France, the turned-leg armchair with cross stretchers in walnut (936.16.4; 1700) is related to the armchair shown on page 40, in Fig. 12.

## (19)

Armchair of gilt beech, with scroll legs and cross-stretcher shown without its velvet upholstery; Italian, 1700-1710 (919.9.7). Its fine carving is finished in silver leaf

covered with yellow varnish to give the appearance of gold. Kinship with the early scroll-leg is clear, but the oriental style of about 1700 is also apparent; the so-called cabriole leg retains the claw foot.



21



22



23



24

## (20)

Settee (970.185 a-c) in Régence style with gilt carved frames, cabriole legs and finely carved scroll feet, France, 1715-1725. Fine embroidery shot with silver threads covers the backs, seats and armrests.

## (21, 22, 23)

Three armchairs of the mid-18th century in France, in Rococo style. The first (961.123.68), in butternut and stained, is signed by Etienne Dieudonné and dates from 1730-40. Seat and back are caned, and there was a loose seat cushion. The second (971.146.15) is painted grey and green and enhanced with needlework upholstery; it is dated 1760-65. The third (957.72), signed by Nicole Blanchard and dated about 1750, is of walnut, stained, and upholstered in brocade.

## (24)

Dutch side chair of about 1750 (953.55.2) is related to both French Louis XV styles and English Queen Anne chairs. The floral marquetry decoration, however, is a Dutch characteristic.

(25)

Painted armchair (941.8.14) of Louis XVI style, second half of the 18th century. Curves have given way to corners and angles, and round or square tapering legs have replaced the Cabriole leg.

(26)

Gilt mahogany side chair (942.13.2b) in the Empire style of the end of the 18th century. The lyre-shaped central splat of the open back and the caryatids forming the front legs indicate the neoclassical character of the Empire (in France) or Regency (in England) style, which lasted for about 20 years.

(27)

Tub chair, an odd hybrid between arm and side chair, in mahogany veneer with floral inlay of tulip-wood (German or Dutch, 1830-50; 974.18). It is typical of the style called, in France, Louis Philippe, in Italy, Germany and Holland, Biedermeier.

(28)

Side chair of ivory (941.51a) made for the European market in Indonesia, about 1880.



25



26



27



28



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